

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

**DENNIS L. WILLIAMS**

*Interviewed by: Peter Eicher*  
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## INTERVIEW

### Life before the Foreign Service

*Q: Today is August 5, 2007. This is Peter Eicher. I'm interviewing Dennis Williams for the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training oral history program. Dennis, say a couple of words.*

WILLIAMS: Good afternoon, Peter. Thank you for the glass of white wine. Let's get going.

*Q: Maybe you can start by saying a few words about where you were born and a little about your background.*

WILLIAMS: Born September 24, 1946 in a little town in northern Illinois called Freeport, Illinois. It always had to be described as that little city 20 miles west of Rockford, which was the city 100 miles west of Chicago, so 120 miles due west of Chicago almost, very close to Iowa, and a typical small farm town. The town itself was the county hub, a typical small town with maybe 15 to 20,000 people, close knit, and only a small number of schools; one high school, that kind of stuff. My parents were both blue

collar workers and I was raised there and stayed there until I went away to college at age 17.

*Q: When you were growing up did you know or care much about foreign affairs? Did you ever talk about it at the dinner table for example?*

WILLIAMS: Rarely. Truthfully...rarely. I think one of the hallmarks of the Midwest is almost apathy as to what is going on in other parts of the world. It's simply not their concern. They were much more concerned about whether the corn was growing and whether or not the drive-in was going to stay open for another season. So no, there was not a great deal of discussion, if any discussion, of foreign affairs, or of foreign politics.

I, however, on a personal level had much more of an interest in it primarily from school. I was a voracious reader all of my life, and even more so back then. I didn't know where I was going to take it, but spent a lot of time reading, all kinds of things, and that continued on into college. However, as I said, there was not a whole lot of discussion in Freeport, Illinois on international politics.

*Q: Were you actually living on a farm?*

WILLIAMS: No. My father, by trade was a butcher although eventually he would leave that and join the school board, to be a maintenance guy at one of the schools. My mother was essentially a retail store clerk for a while, but then joined a company called First-McNess, where she took over the mail department and ran that for 20 or 25 years until she retired. She was actually a smart and capable lady. My father, I think, never finished high school but my mother did graduate from high school. So I did come from a blue collar background, where college-level education was unknown. In fact, I was the first person anywhere in the extended family to go to college.

*Q: Where did you go to college?*

WILLIAMS: North Central College. It's about 30 miles outside of Chicago, actually a small Christian college...for small Christians, as we liked to say, actually a very good school. It was a small private college of less than a thousand students distributed among the four classes. At that point it was only an undergraduate school. It was not a graduate level school then, although it is now. It has gotten quite big. In fact, it's huge in comparison to what it was. It is amazing when I go back now and see it, but it has always been a very good school, and I always felt like I got a very good liberal arts education. I truly believe it provided me the essential foundation for later in life accomplishments and successes.

*Q: When was this, about 1964?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, 1964 to 1968. I started out as a science major, because that had been my forte in high school. I'd been very, very strong in sciences and math. Then somewhere in my sophomore year, I realized how much it bored me. It absolutely bored

me to death. So while I was pretty good at science and mathematics, they were not something I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

The truth of the matter is, I remember standing in the chemistry lab in November 1965, waiting for something to precipitate out of solution. Remember that term?

*Q: No.*

WILLIAMS: Trust me, it's a chemistry term, something to precipitate out of solution. Coagulate, that might be another way of phrasing it. The damn thing wouldn't precipitate, and it was like 10 degrees outside of Chicago. It was snowing, and I said to myself, "What the hell am I doing here? What am I doing in this lab?" I immediately switched and became a political science major. I said, "I've got to find something more interesting than this. I cannot sit here and crunch numbers and play with test tubes. That is not me." So poli-sci it was. Never a regret.

*Q: A lot of campuses were inflamed between '64 and '68. Was it active in your college?*

WILLIAMS: No, we were too busy drinking on the weekends. No, I mean, there was some anti-war movement, but again, a small private college, it just wasn't as dramatic to us in Naperville, Illinois -- should have given you the location of it earlier -- there just wasn't a dramatic interest. Now don't misread what I just said. Those of us who eventually became poli-sci majors spent a lot of time reading about Vietnam and learning what was going on from a historical point of view, and perhaps we had made a mistake. I wasn't very fond of the idea of graduating from college, ending up in the military, and being a soldier over in Vietnam. As things would unfold, I came very close to just that.

*Q: In 1968 the draft was in full swing. What happened to you when you graduated?*

WILLIAMS: I was drafted! [laughter] Actually I think I managed to make it. I think I graduated in June with my class, I officially graduated in September, because I remember I had to take a summer course. I can't remember what the deal was, but I may have officially graduated in September, though I stood and walked with everybody in June. Within a month, I had a draft notice. Within a month! In October, I had my draft notice.

I should back this up just a step. Right after I got out of college, immediately, I took some tests—civil service tests of all things—and had joined the Defense Industrial Security program. It was located at Chicago's O'Hare Airport, on the military side of the airport. The whole goal for me at that particular time was to see if that job would lead to a deferral of military service. As it would turn out, for one of my colleagues who would also end up in the State Department and in Foreign Service, he was deferred because of his job, and I was not deferred. We had the same job title, i.e., DOD Industrial Security Representative. Every draft board handled it individually. He never went into the military. I, however, was invited to join. I believe the letter actually started with the word "Greetings."

I was drafted, but I managed to get a deferral for about nine months, because if you would enlist as opposed to allowing yourself to be drafted, they would give you, and I can't remember, a multi-month stay, that is, a delay for you to do whatever you needed to do. The Army figured this was a better deal for them, since they would then get you for three years vice two. If they drafted you, they had you for only two years. If you enlisted, they had you for three years, so they could afford to give you some sort of deferred status if you'd come in for a longer time, and I did. I chose to do that. Smartest decision I made relative to my time in the US Army.

*Q: So it was the Army then in 1969 probably?*

WILLIAMS: Yup, 1969. July of 1969, to be precise. The deferral also allowed something else. I had to go down to take the physical. I had to take a whole battery of tests, and then the deferred entry started, so maybe this was December, because I didn't go in January. I didn't go in until July, but I had to go in and do all those things, but in the interim, good news, bad news. Good news was I did extremely well on all the tests, the Army tests, and I had a lot of offers from a lot of different organizations in the Army to come join them. I don't know if you're aware, but they actually did sort through the files of newly entering members, and they looked for people with education or IQ or whatever the hell they were looking for. Various Army units would offer jobs. I had no clue. For example, the Army Security Agency, or ASA, called me up and offered me a position with them. They are an intelligence agency within the Army. It was somewhat enticing, because you live a different life when you live in that type of world than you do as an infantry person.

*Q: Which one did you accept?*

WILLIAMS: Actually I didn't accept the ASA job because it was a four year commitment. I was not willing to give the Army four years. What I did accept was a special agent position in Army Military Intelligence. Specifically, I accepted a counter-intelligence special agent job. I was very fortunate. Very, very fortunate. I worked in an office of men who had all been in World War II or in the Korean War, and they all gave me very sound advice and counsel, which I carefully listened to. They probably saved my life. But the counsel, the direction they pointed me in, was Army Military Intelligence and, indeed, that's exactly where I went. To this day, I am so grateful to those colleagues and veterans.

*Q: Can I stop you a second? You said you worked in an office with men. Which office are we talking about?*

WILLIAMS: It was the Defense Industrial Security program. It was part of a Defense Contract Administration's Region in Chicago, which was then part of the Defense Supply Agency which was actually located here in Washington. I physically worked in an office building on the military side of O'Hare International Airport. I was there for less than a year as a civil service Industrial Security Representative, before joining the military. What the Industrial Security Program was about, was going out and ensuring that national security information was appropriately protected by the private sector. It is the program

that every U.S. government agency relies on for the protection classified information and now in recognition of that fact, that program changed its name several years ago to the National Industrial Security Program, i.e., no longer the Defense Industrial Security Program. It was a great place to start for a kid right out of college and to have all those wonderful mentors. *Q: That was in Chicago.*

WILLIAMS: It was in Chicago. It was literally located on the Air Force side of O'Hare Airport. Prior to that, I had no clue the US Military had a presence at O'Hare Airport.

*Q: You joined the Army in Military Intelligence?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, July 1969.

*Q: The Defense Intelligence Agency?*

WILLIAMS: No, not at all. That actually is quite separate from Army Military Intelligence. DIA is its own agency, although military intelligence officers, as I understand it, are seconded to it. They also have their own indigenous work force. I was purely Army Military Intelligence. First, however, in July of 1969 I went off to a horrible place called Fort Polk, Louisiana, for Army basic training. Fort Polk in July, August, and September was someplace to behold. That had to be among the worst eight weeks of my entire life! It's so friggin' hot down there, it would just knock your socks off. To be down there in that heat and humidity of the summer and to be running, exercising, training and all the other things that encompass basic training was just hateful. I went from about 176 lbs. to less than 140 lbs.

*Q: Wow.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Everybody has to do basic training in the Army. I agree with that. That makes all the sense in the world. From there I was put on orders to Fort Holabird, Maryland, which is just below Baltimore. Are you familiar with that?

*Q: I'm not.*

WILLIAMS: You're not. Fort Holabird has been closed for many years, but the Army Military Intelligence school was at Fort Holabird, so I went there for 16 weeks of training. Actually I had to wait a long time so it took almost a year to get through basic training and then the 16 weeks at Fort Holabird. There was a lot of waiting around for class, and a lot of rock painting, no kidding. The Army paints everything.

*Q: Although that's good news if you're trying to tick away your three years in the military.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

*Q: Okay, so you had your training and then what?*

WILLIAMS: I came out of training as the number two graduate. That entitled me to an automatic promotion to corporal – a big deal back then. While I was at Fort Holabird, I realized that maybe I did not want to remain an enlisted vermin. That perhaps I should seek officer status, since I was qualified. So, while I was there I went down and checked in on getting a direct commission. Sure enough, somewhere before I graduated from the special agent class at Fort Holabird, I got called by whatever the office was and was told to come on down, and they had the papers for me to sign for my direct commission. Being a college graduate, having a year's experience in the government, blah blah blah, I met the requirements for a direct commission.

There was just one little catch: I had to choose between infantry or artillery. I said, "What?" They said, "Infantry or artillery. You'll have to go off to infantry school or go off to artillery school." Knowing the life expectancy of a second lieutenant in Vietnam was shorter than a lightning bug, I decided to pass and declined the direct commission. I literally walked away from being a second lieutenant. I said, "Nah, I'm not going to do that." I was married. Terri and I were already married. I chose not to do that, so I stayed with my military intelligence group, graduated second in the class, and then went off to the next part of my Army adventure.

Now, the Army... There's an Army logic that defies all reasonable logic, and I'll give you two examples of it. We had to go out and learn to fire the M-16 rifle. Somewhere at basic training I thought if I only tore up the certification that said I knew how to fire an M-16, I wouldn't go to Vietnam. This is the warped logic you start thinking when you're put in the great green machine. Of course when I got to Fort Holabird they said, "How many of you have fired the M-16?" I said, "Well, why are you asking?" They said, "Everybody has to learn how to fire it. If you haven't learned yet, you have to go do it." "This doesn't mean you're going right off to Vietnam?" "Oh, no, kid. Who told you that?" Of course I didn't have it in my file, because I ripped it out and tore it up, so I had to go out and yet again learn to shoot an M-16 rifle.

The next logic test came when they sent us all out to take the Army Language Aptitude Test, or ALAT. Everybody was trying to out-think this one. "What do you do? Do you do well or do you not do well?" I didn't know. I figured I'd already learned lesson one concerning the M-16, that Army logic defies all.... It gets more like sophistry in motion. But in any event I thought "I'll do the best I can." I took the ALAT and did very well. Lots of other guys just blew it off figuring that if they didn't do well, they couldn't go to Vietnamese language. The end of the story is the Army took our 48 person intelligence class, and they divided it right down the middle, 24 and 24. The 24 who did well were assigned to Japanese language training. The 24 who did poorly went to Vietnamese language training. Stranger than fiction.... I swear, stranger than fiction.

I went off to Japanese language school in Monterrey, California. Terri and I lived on the economy, 222 Lighthouse Avenue, right downtown in Monterrey. A beautiful city. And it was hard, i.e., Japanese language was hard. The Defense Language Institute West Coast, the DLIWC as it was known, knew how to teach languages. I want to be absolutely fair to

them; they really did know how to teach languages. Classes ran six hours a day, three hours in the morning and three hours in the afternoon. You were given a two hour break at noon. You had homework every night. It was hard. It was 47 weeks straight of language training. Actually a year, but there were some breaks in there for Christmas and New Year's, and Easter and whatever, and that was tough. It was very tough, but while you were in language class, other than having to be in uniform every day, there was little other military ritual being enforced. The Army really wanted you to learn the language, so they really did not screw with the students.

The good news is that Japanese is relatively easy to speak. The bad news is it's a highly complex, multi-level language, that is very difficult to become truly proficient. We don't really have this in English, that is, different levels. There's no equivalency in English, which would be like "high English" if you are speaking to the President, "middle English" if speaking to a Professor and "low English" for every day conversation. We don't do that, but there are multiple levels in Japanese, and that makes it very, very difficult. In any event, it was fun to learn it and easy to actually speak for simple stuff.

*Q: Did you have to learn to read and write as well?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. They told us when we graduated that we had the reading and writing skills of about a third grader. I suppose that isn't horrible. Of course, even a third grader can communicate. Japanese comes with two alphabets plus what is best known as Chinese characters. In Japanese characters, or pictograms, are known as Kanji. Then the two alphabets are Hiragana and Katakana. There's a logic to their alphabets, so the alphabets in some ways has made sense. Let me be very definitive here. Japanese has a flexibility that Chinese does not have, and I think it's one of the reasons that Japan was so quick to become ascendant in technology and other areas. The Japanese language, because it actually had alphabets in addition to the Chinese characters, could adopt words from any other language and immediately ingest them into their language. That is something the Chinese have never had an effective way of doing. The Japanese would simply take a word, mostly from English, and adopt it. Hence, airplane in English would become "airopurano." There is no "L" equivalent in Japanese.

*Q: Did most of the people who were taking Japanese actually go to Japan?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, most did.

*Q: Including yourself?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, and it was a great experience.

*Q: This would have been two years after you had joined the Army.*

WILLIAMS: Exactly! I had only one year left now.

*Q: Where did you go in Japan?*

WILLIAMS: We ended up at Camp Zama, Zamaichi prefecture, Japan. Zama's right outside of Tokyo. It's a small Army base, although it had a fairly large Military Intelligence detachment, the primary focus of which was counter intelligence activities. There was a great deal of Russian activity in the country, so we were part of that effort. We did a lot of surveillance on Russian activities, since they were always trying to recruit US military folks. We also did security inspections and penetration raids into other military facilities.

*Q: I know we can't get into anything classified.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, but this is so old. Really, this is all so old! I impersonated a captain, and my boss, who was a Chief Warrant Officer Three, impersonated a colonel, and we penetrated a U.S. military facility and left bombs behind. This was a test of the security at the facility. They failed miserably. They had no idea who we were. None whatsoever, but they let this fake colonel and this fake captain into their facility without any real questions. They let the rank dazzle them, and they paid for it, too. Units get punished when things like that happen, primarily because they really didn't know who we were, and they should not have accepted the uniform and the rank without question.

*Q: You were living right on base at the time?*

WILLIAMS: No, I was living on the economy. I was right off base, and very close. If you were married you could get a housing allowance, and you could live on the economy, so I lived in a small Japanese house just outside the base. Houses in Japan are measured in tatami, which are effectively a six foot by six foot square of straw, that is, tatami mats. We had two small bedrooms, a small living room, a small eat-in kitchen, and a bath, and the whole place was probably not more than 600 or 800 square feet, though not bad, in general, for somebody just starting out.

*Q: Did they ship your wife with you as part of your orders or did she come on her own?*

WILLIAMS: No, we had to pay for Terri coming over. They were very generous once you got her there in terms of giving her an ID card, PX privileges and all of that stuff, but you had to pay the travel. . It was an unaccompanied tour, but if you brought her then the Army was decent in its treatment of spouses, and they would allow you to live on the economy.

*Q: Did you find you used your Japanese?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, sure!

*Q: Professionally as well as around town?*

WILLIAMS: Almost never professionally, truthfully. Never professionally, because I ended up dealing almost exclusively with other Americans as a counter intelligence agent, and that's what I was, a counter intelligence special agent.

*Q: Sounds like they should have given you Russian.*

WILLIAMS: You know, I watched them carry people out of the Russian classes in DLI in straightjackets, so I'm not so sure. I mean, we thought our language was hard, but I think Russian is really tough, as are the other Slavic languages like Hungarian, Bulgarian, et al. I'm not kidding about the straightjacket. We actually saw them take a guy out of the Russian language class in a straightjacket. I thought, "I'm not going over there!"

*Q: This was a one year assignment in Japan?*

WILLIAMS: Yes.

*Q: And you spent the entire year in the same place in the same job?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, I did. It was, however, great fun and a great learning experience. If you have never been in the military, you really cannot understand it.

*Q: And at the end of the one year?*

WILLIAMS: I left. Let's say a little bit about that year, too. It's very interesting. I was there as a civilian. I was not there as a Sergeant, E-5,, but rather as a Department of Army civilian employee. Of course, this was all make believe, all fictitious, but Military Intelligence could do this. I had a civilian ID card that said I was a GS-12. The only club Terri and I ever went to was the officers' club. It's just the kind of a uniqueness of Military Intelligence. We did things that others couldn't do, but we could do, so it was a lot of fun. In many ways it was a lot of fun.

*Q: Were you undercover as a non-military person?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. I operated with a cover status. As I said, my ID card said civilian GS-12, and I wore civilian clothes every day. I never wore a uniform unless we were doing a penetration raid or some other thing. We never wore Army clothes; however, even if we did, on those rare occasions when we put on Army uniforms, we never wore rank.

You probably didn't know this but Military Intelligence wear only the Military Intelligence insignia on both sides of their collars. No rank. There's no rank in a Military Intelligence unit, none whatsoever. Within the unit itself, it was unique. Virtually everybody there was like me, an enlisted college graduate hiding out from guys with real guns. The lieutenant colonel in charge, who was a great guy, we did address as colonel. The major was called major. The captains, lieutenants, sergeants, or whomever were called Tom, Dick and Harry. It was an extremely informal unit and among some of the

smartest people I had ever met in the Army...very smart, capable people. Which is, of course, why they were MI in the first place.

In any event, we spent a great year there. We had a lot of fun. You asked about Japanese. Whenever I spoke Japanese, to a Japanese person, I got one of two responses: absolute astonishment, and nothing would come out of their mouths or typically, they'd look at me and say, "Ah, my name is..." or "Oh, no. The Pizza Hut is over there," they would answer me in English, because the Japanese were just as interested in practicing their English as allowing you to practice your Japanese. I'm exaggerating a little bit. If you got outside of the city, you would speak only Japanese.

*Q: Did you get around the country very much?*

WILLIAMS: We did. We had a little Nissan Bluebird, then called Datsun Bluebird. We bought a little used car over there, and we pretty much took off and went to all the places we could. We tried climbing Mount Fuji, however, about a thousand feet from the very, very top, which I think is 11,000 feet, Terri really ran out of steam. By the way, on the way up to the top of Mount Fuji there were oxygen stations along the way. You put in your 50 yen, and you sit there and suck on an oxygen mask for two minutes to revitalize. Then you see this little old man carry the oxygen cylinders up the mountain at a pace about four times yours. We ended up sleeping in some kind of commercial rest house—oh, my God!—on some tatami matted floor where everybody was sleeping in rows side by side and for which we had to pay some exorbitant fee. They give you a little rice bag for your pillow. It was horrible. Horrible! But yeah, we did get around. We did get around, but mostly just in the city and environs of Tokyo

*Q: In Japan in 1971 and 1972, it must have been?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct, the last half of 1971 and the first half of 1972.

*Q: This would have been what, about 25 years after the war?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct, about 25 years after the end of World War II.

*Q: How were relations with the United States at that stage?*

WILLIAMS: That's a very interesting question, and it's a good question. Most of the younger people in Japan were very much enamored with Americans and wanted to learn English and things of that nature. Then there was a second group, and I taught English at night there for a little extra money to a group of factory managers, and that was an interesting thing to behold, because most of them were too young to have remembered WWII.

Many of them were too young to have remembered the war well, even though they were born before the war. Some had been born after the war, and a handful of them had participated in the war, but relatively few. They were very open to discussing anything, to

include WWII and they seemed to harbor no animosity. I believe they understood how well the United States had treated Japan after the surrender.

The older people, the older men, who experienced the war, had amazingly good feelings toward the United States, because they thought the United States after the war could have been the vindictive victor, and it was not. Led by General McArthur, the U.S. was the best of all possible occupiers, and the Japanese held McArthur in reverence and had a great deal of respect for the United States because of what we *didn't* do after the war, not just what we *did* do. Then occasionally you'd meet that subway rider who was in his 50s, 60s, 70s, who would glare at you across the subway in kimono, ceremonial Japanese dress which was still worn everywhere, and you knew he hated you. You knew he had been in the war, and you knew he hated you for just being an American.

*Q: People were still wearing kimonos around the streets and subways?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

*Q: ...because these days of course they wouldn't do that anymore.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. You would see all kinds of Japanese women and men in kimono. What does kimono mean? It just means a dress thing. That's all it actually means in Japanese: dress thing. Either men or women can wear kimono. Traditionally it's attached to women, but men have it. You've seen it. Whether worn by men or women, they are similar in appearance. The last time I went through the airport in Tokyo, I really did not see anybody in kimono. Times have changed.

*Q: At the end of your time in Japan you were still in the military?*

WILLIAMS: Still in the military. I had a wonderful colonel, Marsden Harmon. I still remember his name. Lieutenant Colonel Marsden Harmon. He had Terri and me over for dinner just a week or so before we were to leave Japan, and he gave me the sales pitch, "What will it take to keep you in the military, in the Army?" It's very easy, Colonel. I'll take a direct commission to captain in Military Intelligence." He said, "I can't do that!" and I said, "I know. I know, so give me a hug and we'll part as friends." I would have taken a first lieutenant position. He was a great guy and it was my pleasure to have known and worked for him.

It was a great experience. It was an experience I would never forget. You don't know that at the time, of course, but it was a great experience. I really believe it's hard to understand the military if you haven't been in it, and I really do believe that. My three years were up, and I left.

*Q: Did they send you back to Illinois or what?*

WILLIAMS: They did. They sent me back to Illinois, back to my job at O'Hare Airport. While I was gone I had been promoted automatically from a GS-5, I think, in 1968, to a

GS-9 when I returned in the fall of 1972. That was about \$5,700 a year in 1968. I actually do not remember what my annual salary was as a GS-9, but it was probably around \$10,000 in 1972. How did we ever live?

*Q: You were GS-12 in Japan.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, I took a demotion! I was a GS-12 in Japan being actually paid as a Sergeant, E-5.

*Q: So hang on. You came back, and you got a higher level job?*

WILLIAMS: Automatic promotions take place for those who were in the military, so while I was gone, the automatic promotion from GS5 to 7 took place, the automatic promotion from GS7 to 9 had taken place, so I came back, and I was being paid some lofty salary, perhaps as I mentioned before around \$10,000, maybe a little more or a little less. But compared to an Army Sergeant's pay, it was a lot.

By the way, I was a subscriber at this point in history to Foreign Affairs. My overseas experience had kindled a desire for a better understanding of foreign affairs.

*Q: Foreign Affairs magazine?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, *Foreign Affairs* magazine. I had started reading them and collecting them and tried to ascertain the wisdom therein and, about the same time I realized I couldn't remain in Chicago. The kid from the small farm town in Illinois had just gone over and lived in a foreign country, spoken a foreign language, traveled around, had great experiences, why would I want to live in northern Illinois for the rest of my life? It took no time at all to figure that all out... a month or two.

I started working with George Larson, who was the guy who got deferred. He had the same job, but his draft board was Hinsdale, and mine was Freeport. We started plotting and planning on what we were going to do to get out of there. He actually was transferred from Chicago to the office in Indianapolis. It was a much smaller office, and much more intimate. I think there were like five of us, and we were all very good friends, and George was my supervisor down there. He was the GS-12, and by now I was a GS-11. One day he came back and he said, "You know, I found this place in the State Department called the Office of Security. You ever heard of it?" "No."

Let's take a break, Peter.

### **Hired by Diplomatic Security (SY), Department of State**

*Q: Okay.*

*Q: When we left, you had just heard about State Department security and were about to pursue that with your friend?*

WILLIAMS: We did. Somehow we managed to find the office in Washington, D.C. that was responsible for State security, and we managed to get our résumés in, and then we managed to fill out whatever the federal forms were that you had to do back then. In fact, I think it's the same form. What do they fill out now, Peter? Do you remember?

*Q: I can't remember what the federal form is.*

WILLIAMS: SF-86, Standard Form 86, the background investigation form. Anyway, a big long form. We sent our packages to the Department of State, Office of Security. At the time I was in graduate school, at Butler University in Indianapolis. . I was working on my Master's degree in history.

*Q: This is while you were working full time?*

WILLIAMS: This is while I was working full time. As I said, I attended Butler University, which is a private school in Indianapolis. It is actually a pretty good school, and I was going to school at night working on my Master's degree.

*Q: Security. Did either one of you have a background in security that made this appeal to you?*

WILLIAMS: Well, industrial security is what we were in, so yes. I also brought a background in counter intelligence and, by the way, Army intelligence agents have law enforcement powers. They can arrest people. Another anomaly is that counter intelligence special agents have to be corporals and sergeants and staff sergeants, and they can't be specialists, because in the military only commissioned or non-commissioned officers can arrest somebody. Just a little military trivia.

In any event, I didn't know a lot about this. I did get some telephone numbers, did send in whatever the paperwork was to the State Department, and then one day out of nowhere I got a phone call that I was to go to meet the special agent-in-charge in the office in Chicago, John Richardson. So I went up to do an interview with John Richardson. The fact of the matter is, it was no interview. He had no clue what to ask me or what to say to me... none whatsoever. It's kind of like, "Hi! Why're you here?" But he was a very nice man, so for about 45 minutes or an hour, we just chatted about stuff. There was no formal interview process whatsoever. It was the same for my friend George Larson.

*Q: Any kind of exam process?*

WILLIAMS: No, nothing, nothing whatsoever. The next thing I know, there's a person showing up in Indianapolis, who was an SY special agent, Jeff Bowers, who's doing my background investigation. The Department of State Office of Security was known, back in the day, as "SY," its bureaucratic acronym. That didn't take much, since I had a current Department of Defense top secret clearance at the time and so it didn't take long to update my investigation. But the whole process took months and months. Eventually, a year after it started—a year after it started—I would get a phone call, while I was on a

trip somewhere in Indiana, from the State Department, and essentially they said, “Now, or never.”

*Q: Now meaning right now?.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, if you want the job...

I think this was in July or August, and we had a report date of something like October 1.

*Q: What year are we talking about now?*

WILLIAMS: 1974. I was a little perturbed, because I had just had 21 hours in on my master’s degree, with a 3.9 GPA. Some fool had given me one B. I really didn’t want to throw that away, but as it turned out, I did throw it away. I had to walk away from it, which was a shame and I’m sorry, but we chose to join the State Department, and by sometime in late September or whatever, we were driving out to Washington, D.C. with a Ryder truck and Terri driving our car, our only car at the time.

*Q: You had discussed this with your wife of course. You understood what Foreign Service meant?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah, of course. We fully understood this meant *foreign service*.

*Q: Were you happy about that prospect?*

WILLIAMS: Terri loved living overseas. She loved Japan. It was not an issue, never an issue. She understood it completely that the Foreign Service meant *foreign service*. So we got out here. We were assigned immediately to the Washington Field Office.

*Q: Let me stop you there. You were driving out with a truck. Didn’t they move you out in those days?*

WILLIAMS: No. No. The job was offered in Washington, D.C. Be here. Nope, nobody moved anybody. There was no financial assistance for the move. Hopefully, this has all changed.

*Q: Presumably you started with some kind of training or A100 class or something like that?*

WILLIAMS: No.

*Q: No. Okay, then what?*

WILLIAMS: Interestingly enough what State SY was looking for at the time was college graduates. They were pretty vicious on that. You had to be a college graduate.

*Q: SY was what's now the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.*

WILLIAMS: SY was the Office of Security under the Bureau of Administration. The office symbol was SY, so it was A/SY for Bureau of Administration, Office of Security. In fact, I realized after I got out here what they were doing. They were hiring people who were college graduates and who already had some sort of training by some other federal agency. In my case I had 16 weeks of counter intelligence special agent training by the Army. That's what they were trying to find. They had a lot of former military intelligence folks...a lot of them.

*Q: How about the Japanese language? Did you have a sense that appealed to them at all?*

WILLIAMS: A great deal, yes... absolutely. Within two years, I would be going back to Japan for them. I think it was a very important aspect. They started basic special agents' class, about three months after I came on board, so by January or February I was BSAC, Basic Special Agent Class. BSAC Number 2. It was pretty pathetic. Good thing the Army had given me good training.

### **Special Agent, Washington Field Office**

*Q: This was two months after you came on board. What happened in the first two months you were on board?*

WILLIAMS: You go over and qualify with a hand gun, and you start working protection almost immediately, not having a clue what you're doing.

*Q: Working protection meaning a protective detail of a prominent individual?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. And you started doing background investigations immediately, too. These were the old SY days when the primary focus was background investigations (BI) and protective security. Even though we still had responsibility for passport and visa fraud, very few criminal investigations were being done. I did a few criminal investigations, quite a few BIs, and lots of protective security. I was on the road a great deal of the time during my first two years, going all over the U.S. and all over the world.

*Q: Which presumably would have been shift work, that sort of thing?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. I would go through the basic special agent class. My recollection was that it was about eight weeks long. It was okay. It taught the techniques of protective security, it taught a little bit about law, criminal law. It taught whatever the basic things we needed at that time were, but primarily much of my really good training had come from the Army. The Army had nothing to fear from the State Department, in terms of training, at that moment of history. After working one protective detail as just a hump agent – non-supervisory position – I never would do that again. For the next two years, I was constantly an agent-in-charge on protective details. In part, because I had entered the

Foreign Service as a GS-11 equivalent, or an FS-4 in today's grades, and also because I had pretty good experience with DOD and the Army.

*Q: You're talking protective security. Was this for foreigners?*

WILLIAMS: It depended. I became kind of the agent-in-charge for the Deputy Secretary of State, whenever he traveled overseas. Chuck Robinson was Henry Kissinger's Deputy, back in the day. He was a great guy, and after the first trip that I went on with him, his office always asked for me by name. He was a good guy to travel with. He was a very, very decent guy to work with and always very considerate of all his staff. A true gentleman.

*Q: Was he doing a lot of traveling?*

WILLIAMS: Not really, mostly just occasional.

*Q: What kind of places did he go?*

WILLIAMS: I traveled with him to the Middle East. I traveled with him to Africa. It's Africa that I remember the most, because we were there for a long time, and we traveled in a private jet over much of what was then Zaire, now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We spent significant time in Kinshasa and Goma, and then went on to several other African countries, albeit only briefly. After a while, these trips start to blur. But somewhere on this trip we went on a safari and that was one of those once in a lifetime experiences.

*Q: I'm not sure how the Deputy Secretary travels these days. Was he by himself? Did he have a big crowd of aides with him? What kind of trip was this?*

WILLIAMS: One aide that I recall, at the time Bob Hormats. Bob would eventually quit. Bob joined some financial group in NYC, I would see him on TV doing ads for the company. He did rise into a senior executive position, and I believe he returned to the Department in the last few years in some senior capacity. I never saw Bob again, nor Deputy Secretary Chuck Robinson, after my first two years on the job. Of course today, as you know, there are two Deputy Secretaries and I have no idea if or how they travel. So much has changed as the world has evolved. I can only assume that DS would provide them some protective security if they were to travel overseas.

*Q: For the trips, it was the Deputy Secretary, one aide, and four agents from diplomatic security?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct,, four agents and six of us comprising the traveling entourage. Chuck Robinson was a great guy to travel with because we were always part of his party no matter what was going on. He never said, "...and my security guys." He said, "my colleagues." "My colleagues will have to come with me for this." He was a lot of fun to travel with. I just got somehow designated as his man. You know, we went off

to Australia again. Same party, right? Chuck Robinson, Deputy-Secretary, the aide and four of us. I will never forget this to this day, flying over on Pan Am or whatever, and we get into Honolulu, and they cannot get the cargo doors on the plane open. I mean, they cannot get them open.

*Q: This is not the private jet, it's a Pan Am?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct, it's a Pan Am 747. We're now flying commercial. I don't know who gave us the private jet to fly around Africa, but that can really spoil you. Anyway, there we sit in Honolulu. What are we going to do? Well, there's a Qantas flight leaving from Honolulu to Canberra within the hour. We scrambled around the airport, ran to the Qantas counter, told them who we were, told them what we were doing, told them what we had to get the Deputy Secretary down there for, whatever meetings were taking place, and they held the plane. You will recall Qantas is Queensland and Northern Territories Aerial Service.

We're walking down towards the plane with the station manager from Qantas when I said to him, "You do know we have guns." He said, "*What???*" and everything stopped. The whole party had to stop. The whole entourage stops and huddles in the middle of the jet way. He said, "You've got *guns*?" "We've got guns." I said, "What do you want us to do?" We're desperate now. We don't have much bargaining power, not a great deal to negotiate with. The Australian Federal Police knew we were coming and were going to support us as soon as we arrived. He said, "Give me the bullets." I said, "Give you the bullets out of our guns?" He said, "Give me the bullets out of your guns!" ... "Just the bullets out of our guns?" "Yes! Just give me the bullets!" So here are four people standing in the jet way with .357 magnums out, popping out six bullets. So we each give them six bullets. Now think about this.

*Q: Presumably you have some more bullets someplace else.*

WILLIAMS: I have bullets everywhere on something called speed loaders, little round things that hold the bullets and stick them in. So we all give him our six bullets each. He's got 24 bullets. He goes, finds a plastic bag, and he's happy. And we're happy. We all get on board, of course, and one at a time go up to the restroom, go inside, take out one of the many, many speed loaders that we're all carrying, and reload our guns. Bizarre...truly bizarre.

But in any event the rest of the trip goes off without a hitch. It's where I learned for the first time that Australians really don't do anything but drink.

*Q: Let me go back to the guns for a moment. At this time do you recall whether they even had metal detectors to go onto airplanes yet?*

WILLIAMS: No, that would come a little bit later. But as a federal agent, we would not have gone through the metal detectors anyway.

*Q: My memory's a little vague on when that started, but it was not that long ago it seems to me.*

WILLIAMS: No, actually it was longer ago than you think, because I remember flying in on a Chuck Robinson trip. I remember flying into Dakar, Senegal, when we were not supposed to be stopping into Dakar, Senegal. I remember being herded off the plane into a terminal on this completely unplanned, unknown stop. This was not a big operation, and I'm thinking, "We have a problem here, because we're not supposed to be here, no one in Dakar at the embassy knows we're sitting out here."

Then I remember they pulled out a... I remember this vividly, that they pulled out a walk through metal detector, for all of us to go through to get back on the plane. I'm thinking, "Oh, we have a huge, huge problem. What are we going to do?" It's amazing how badges and black passports back then could still do stunning things. I told all my agents, "Get your diplomatic passports out, and get your badges out, and be prepared to show them when I tell you to show them."

We knew it would turn into a nightmare, and we just tried to bullshit our way through until we could get someone from the embassy out there to help us out. The idea of spending time in a Senegalese jail had crossed my mind.

**[End Tape 1a, begin Tape 1b]**

*Q: Denny, when we stopped, you were just about to go through the metal detectors in Dakar.*

WILLIAMS: That is correct. So there stands the formidable metal detector, and we are full of guns, bullets, handcuff, radios – all kinds of stuff. We would never make through the detector. However, one small detail: you have to plug in a metal detector for it to work. We all walked through and, of course, since it actually was not functional, there were no issues. Disaster averted by the hand of fate. We got back on the plane, and the plane took off. We never did learn why we stopped there.

*Q: I had distracted you there, because you were really in Australia and we changed to Dakar.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, sorry for that parenthetical aside to Senegal. I was really in Australia, because it was my first time in Australia, and it was the first time I had any real experience with Australians, in their own country. What I didn't realize is that they really do drink a lot. I mean, they drink all the time, and they asked me to go out and have a beer after my first night or second night there, and I said, "Sure." We went out and, of course, someone ordered a round of beers. Okay, and I'm sitting there drinking, and about half way through my beer another beer shows up. I finished the first one and take a couple of sips of the new one, and the third beer shows up. I'm thinking... "There's no way here, guys." This is a losing proposition, and somewhere around the fourth beer I

excused myself and got up and left, and they stayed. This, I would find out, was not atypical.

These same guys the following morning when I went down to get some breakfast, I was not on right away, I came on in the afternoon. The next morning, late morning, I went down for breakfast. Typically the four of us, agents that is, would divide up into two shifts, two and two, so we could spread this over a longer part of the day. My Australian police colleagues were sitting there drinking beer before they came to work! I thought, “This is out of control down here.” But indeed, it is their culture, and they just drink a lot of beer, more than I could ever do. In any event, they were fun to work with – probably because they were always about half in the bag

*Q: Let’s talk just a little bit about what you were doing and how you were doing it professionally. You had a team of four protecting the Deputy Secretary and were two on and two off. Did this mean you had 12 hour shifts?*

WILLIAMS: No, not at all. We would do typically what’s known as portal to portal. We would be with him from first thing in the morning until we put him in his hotel room at night, and then we all went to bed. Nevertheless, that makes for an extremely long day for those who are working. Typically, we would surround his room with ours, so if anything was going on, we would hear it. We also knew most people had no idea who he was and that made him relatively low risk. We would look at his schedule and decide how we could give each other time off, but there were many days where all four of us worked all day, portal to portal, from early morning to late at night. Those were long days. We tried to leverage low risk situations where we could give one or two of us a little time off – sometimes it worked and sometimes it did not.

Typically when we were overseas, the local police would provide uniformed protection at his door, in the hotel, wherever it was, so we would depend on them to provide at least night-time coverage. If DepSec were going to do something light in the morning, let’s say he was going over to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That’s a relatively safe environment, so we’d have two people work that particular move. Let’s say at night he was going to a banquet where he was just an invitee, then all four of us would work because that’s a much more uncontrolled environment that you cannot count on being secure, not even remotely secure.

If he were going over to the embassy, two of us would go with him, not four of us. That’s how we would break it up. We’d break it up based on level of risk as to where he was going and what he was doing, and that way we were able to ensure we did not burn ourselves out. It’s called pushing. We’d be able to push each other, give each other a little time off to sleep in, read a book, do whatever, whatever you had to do. This is essential for longer trips, especially overseas. It is really hard to be 100% when you are tired.

*Q: For those of us who don’t know exactly how this works, would you actually be in the car with him when he was going someplace, or did you have a follow car, or did it depend on the particular circumstances?*

WILLIAMS: It depended a little bit on the circumstances. Typically, if he were being hosted by the host government, they would provide a car and a driver. As the AIC, I would always go with him. Always, no exceptions, and he expected that. I would always be in the same car he was in, typically I would be in the front passenger seat. The other agents would typically have a car from the embassy, so they would be behind us in a follow car, along with an RSO local employee. With only four agents you're not working this as a protective detail, you're working this as an escort. We recognized that it was an escort, and that we were just going to provide him very last, last second close-in protection.

*Q: The difference here you might explain.*

WILLIAMS: In an escort you're doing it to facilitate with local police, to coordinate with the local security and to provide limited protection. You're not doing it because you believe the person faces a serious risk in any way. You're doing it to facilitate, to facilitate through security and other procedural things, which can be troublesome. You would provide close-in protection if all other countermeasures were to fail, and typically all others would mean the local host government police or security services.

A protective detail assumes a measure risk and would operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and at the residence. We provide escorts to foreign dignitaries who are not at risk. Let me pick somebody who no one cares about. Nobody cares about the minister of foreign affairs from Fiji, truthfully, so we might provide an escort just to facilitate his or her way around the United States, because a couple of agents with badges and guns can make all kinds of things happen, and what we don't want to happen to him or her is an embarrassing situation or some sort of diplomatic incident. We're not really concerned about that personal risk, because we've determined there is little to no personal risk. The DS Intelligence and Threat Analysis determines risk. For some protectees, for example, the foreign minister of Israel, you can just *assume* substantial risk, and the protective detail will be commensurately sized.

*Q: This would be the case when you were traveling with the Deputy Secretary in Australia. Would it also be the case when you were with him in Africa?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, it was. Where we were going was considered friendly. They'd invited him or he was going for one good reason or another. We didn't think he was in particular risk in Africa either. We went to Indonesia with him, and we got terrific embassy and local police support, so the four of us were still the same four of us. At one point on one trip, we increased to six agents, but I really do not remember which trip that was. For the most part, we were four agents.

*Q: So typically you would be in the front seat with him when he went to, say, see his counterpart in the foreign ministry or when he went to the parliament or businessmen's meeting or wherever he was going. What would you do at that point when you got there?*

WILLIAMS: Go with him. Where he went I went. I would stand behind him slightly to his right. Typically the other three agents were only feet away, posted as the situation would determine. If we were working as a team, it was because we're in an uncontrolled environment. A ministry of foreign affairs, for example, would normally not be considered an uncontrolled environment. When you move, that is a walking move, the AIC would be right behind him slightly to the right and the other agents would form a loose diamond, i.e., one on point, and one to his left and right and slightly behind. As AIC, I would be very close to him and the others would not. It works well.

But as the AIC, I would stand off to his right just slightly behind him. Now, why there? Because I can grab his belt on his pants and push him to the ground or swing him out of the way, while my right hand's free to draw my weapon. I mean, a lot of this was actually fairly well thought out. It's not my job to engage the bad guy. It's the other agents' job. My job is to cover and evacuate, but if I could not cover, if I couldn't grab him and pull him away from a bad scene and let the other agents handle it, then I'd push him to the ground.

*Q: Now let's say when you were with him walking through the market in Kinshasa or in Jakarta or something, were you in your diamond shape being careful?*

WILLIAMS: Probably not for several reasons. First of all nobody knew who he was. He was just another tourist. There's actually a lot that goes into protective security. You're thinking of what you're doing and how you're going to do it. We would have all dressed down. There'd be no ties, there'd be no suits. We would be trying not to draw attention to ourselves. While I, as AIC, would always be very near him, the others would be in a looser, more informal, formation. But always alert, always watching.

*Q: No dark glasses?*

WILLIAMS: No dark glasses.

*Q: No little piece in your ear?*

WILLIAMS: Unfortunately that's always there. It probably would have been there. You've got to be able to talk to the other agents. But we tried to make ourselves look as much like tourists as possible, and just five or six guys out shopping. I mean truly, we are just trying to blend in and look as *touristy* as possible. In some ways, these unplanned activities, like going to the bazaar in Cairo, are the safest because no one knows you're coming and no one knows you are there. The bad news is if someone recognizes you while you're there, you could often be too understaffed to handle a problem situation. But, honestly, who knew who Chuck Robinson was? The answer is nobody, really.

*Q: Generally you would not have the advance itinerary, and have gone to the places beforehand to check them out, for example?*

WILLIAMS: It depends. If we were going to the foreign ministry, we would have done an advance. Why? Because we depend on our lead agent; we would follow our lead agent to show us where we were going. Yes, there's going to be somebody from the ministry to take us, but he's also the guy who would have been there two or three hours in advance. He would know how to get out if something were to happen. That's true at anyplace like that, so we would almost always have taken one of our four and sent them in advance. They would meet us curbside when we arrived. He's the lead agent in the diamond formation, because if something happens, your advance agent has got to get you out of there. You may never have seen that site before. You probably haven't, and you're going to depend on the advance agent to get the DepSec and the rest of us out of there.

Protection is really a lot more scientific than you think. At some point I want to talk with you about protecting Prince Charles and how much fun that was, but we'll come to that scene at some point.

*Q: Chronologically?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, chronologically. He's way, way down the road.

But working with Chuck Robinson, he was so easy to work with because he would do what I told him. If I said, "Mr. Secretary, I need you to move over this way," he would move. He would move. He had no ego, he had no arrogance, and he was a very good protectee because he understood we were doing something for a reason. Well, he was very much involved, a detail guy, and if time permitted we would explain to him why we were doing something. I believe he may have been an engineer, and was very involved in mining. I think he was from Texas, as I recall, and just a wonderful man to work with.

*Q: He wasn't expecting you to do other kinds of errands for him and so forth?*

WILLIAMS: No, never.

*Q: So you didn't have to deal at least with that kind of problem?*

WILLIAMS: No. I don't deal with that very well on a personal level, though I never have. If somebody says, "Hey, boys, so get my bag," they're probably not going to like the response they get back, and it probably won't matter if it's the Deputy Secretary or anybody else. That is actually a bad example, but you know what I mean. We cannot allow ourselves to be distracted doing menial tasks.

After a while we got to be such good traveling partners, understanding what each of us was doing. I didn't expect it. I wouldn't expect him to take care of his own bags, but I expected his aide to take care of his bags. What we'd do is we'd assign one agent to all our bags and just pay a porter. Just pay somebody to get the bags moved while ensuring they remained secure. We do this for all protective details.

*Q: ...Because watching the bags would be part of security, too?*

WILLIAMS: Of course. We don't want our personal bags compromised, so we'd have an agent take care of all of the bags, while the rest of us would provide protective security for the principal, in this case the Deputy Secretary of State.

*Q: During these approximately two years, I think it was, that you were traveling with Chuck Robinson, was this actually your designated job in the department?*

WILLIAMS: No, I was a special agent assigned to the Washington Field Office. While I was the Deputy Secretary's agent-in-charge, he traveled relatively infrequently, so I worked investigations and a lot of other protective security details.

*Q: Was the Field Office different from the Department somehow?*

WILLIAMS: The Washington Field Office, or WFO, was located in Rosslyn, so yes, it was apart from Main State.

*Q: It's just a part of the Washington SY establishment...*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct.

*Q: ...as opposed to a separate office in Washington, for example?*

WILLIAMS: No, it was just an operation that was located elsewhere. Even back then DS had nine field offices around the United States in places you would expect: Washington, Miami, New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Dallas or Houston, etc. DS had nine fairly large field offices and then, under the field offices, there were smaller Resident Agencies, such as Seattle, New Orleans, Phoenix, et al. These RAs each report to a particular Field Office. I don't remember where they all were located.

*Q: So you were a protective officer at the particular field office?*

WILLIAMS: No.

*Q: I'm trying to get it right.*

WILLIAMS: No, I was just in a position of Special Agent that happened to be located in the Washington Field Office. Unless you were specifically assigned to the Secretary's Protective Detail for a two year period, you were a "generalist," generic special agent, who could be assigned any number of duties. Typically, those duties are investigations, protective services, occasional TDYs to fill in for an overseas RSO, temporary duty with the Secretary's Detail, etc. Really varied duties and almost always interesting stuff I got to travel the world.

*Q: There could have been any sort of assignment given to you and, in fact, you were given different things when not actually traveling with the Deputy Secretary.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, sure, absolutely. I would come back to WFO and work on investigations, other protective security assignments, etc. I did lots of background investigations. One of the worst things I ever did was I got pulled into homosexual investigations when we still did those things. I had to help someone interview this guy who was suspected of being a homosexual. I'm not fond of this memory.

*Q: State Department?*

WILLIAMS: State Department. After essentially an interrogation, I got him to admit he was a homosexual. Then I thought what an awful thing to be doing to a human being. The only good news was he had a job somewhere, and we weren't taking his job away, but I thought we shouldn't be in this business. I did not like that at all. But back in the day, the State Department would not hire homosexuals. All of that has, fortunately, changed for the better.

*Q: At that time it was prohibited to be in the State Department and be homosexual?*

WILLIAMS: It was. He was actually coming, I think, from Walter Reed. He was a homosexual, and I knew it. I knew he was. We took the gentleman into an interview room in the Washington Field Office, and it took about two hours of interrogation to elicit a confession. I honestly do not know why he just did not get up and leave. . I look back at that and say those were just the times, and we did what we had to do back then, but I certainly didn't like it. I did not like that at all, and I intentionally stayed away from the sexual orientation investigations.

*Q: Was this a set assignment where you were assigned for two-year tours in this office? Was it working like that in those days?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, it was a two to three year assignment. That would have been set, two or three years. My suspicion is that for most agents, it was two years, although you could be given another year there if you wanted it or if DS wanted you to stay. Other agents would move on to one of the other operations within the office of security back then, but we did do a variety of things. I mean, I did not do just Chuck Robinson. I remember one time being called and saying, "We need you to be an armed courier to take some top secret material to Cairo," so I went down and picked up this orange courier bag that had maps drawn up by Kissinger and his assistants concerning the Middle East. I flew first class to Cairo with the American ambassador to Egypt. Very cool.

*Q: Who'd have been the American ambassador in the mid-'70s?*

WILLIAMS: I have no idea who was the ambassador then, but a good guy.

*Q: Was the courier service part of SY at that point?*

WILLIAMS: It was not. It was not, but they wanted an armed courier to take this, and the courier service couldn't do that, so that's why it came to an SY agent to go with the ambassador and to take it back to Cairo. He invited me over to his house to stay there for the time I was in Cairo. I demurred and just stayed in embassy housing. I stayed in the embassy housing right across the street from where the embassy is. They had some transient apartments. You know where the embassy is, and you probably know that across the street, literally, were these TDY apartments. Actually, the apartments were fairly nice and very convenient to the embassy. They were gone by the time you and I were serving together in Cairo.

*Q: I remember the British Embassy across the street.*

WILLIAMS: It was down the street, Peter. Down the street two blocks.

*Q: Too many years ago.*

WILLIAMS: Too many years ago, yes. Anyway, I stayed there four or five days waiting for the maps to be redrawn to take them back, then I hopped on a plane as a first class courier again and brought back maps, delivered them to the Department, and called it a day. Who gets to do stuff like this? Oh yeah, we did.

*Q: In sealed red packs?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, absolutely, however, they were sealed orange.

*Q: Chained to your wrist?*

WILLIAMS: No. No, but it was a little bit of an issue when I wanted to go to the restroom. When you're alone it's bit more of an issue. I just buckled in my passenger next to me, my orange bag, and went to the restroom. Of course, who's going to screw around with you? You know.

There was a lot of that. There was a lot of the Deputy Secretary. There was a lot of bizarre stuff like that. There were a lot of background investigations in there, too. When I'd get back between trips, we were doing a lot of background investigations.

*Q: A lot of variety. It sounds like it was a pretty good introduction to the State Department and the Foreign Service.*

WILLIAMS: It was. You really get to learn the Department of State, how it is organized and how things function, and the world traveling quickly introduced us to how Foreign Service posts operate, that is, how they are organized as well as who does what duties.

WILLIAMS: I did a lot of protection and a lot of it was domestic, so I really learned a great deal about the United States. Mrs. Marcos, the Israeli Foreign Minister, various British Royals, various Middle Eastern crown princes – really quite varied.

*Q: That must have been interesting too.*

WILLIAMS: Unbelievably interesting.

*Q: What did you think of Mrs. Marcos as a protectee?*

WILLIAMS: I misspoke. I said I never worked other than agent-in-charge. That's not true. One time I worked as the deputy on her detail. She had a favorite. Bob Cronin was her favorite agent-in-charge. We did provide her protection. She did have 24 hour, seven days a week protection when she came because of her lifestyle, because of who she was, because of her notoriety.

*Q: This was when Ferdinand Marcos was still in power?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct. She would come to New York. She would spend enormous amounts of money. *Enormous* amounts of money, which was always amazing because the president of the Philippines made \$5,000 a year, but I guess they were frugal and invested well. She bought shoes. Yes, she bought shoes!

*Q: Seriously, you went to shoe stores with her?*

WILLIAMS: Seriously. We went everywhere with her. I remember going to the Doubleday or whatever the bookstore was on Fifth Avenue with her. That was one of those days where I was having a bad day. She'd be killing us, keeping us out until God-knows what hours of the night and then we'd come back. We were all working her portal to portal, and she's doing us in. She's just killing us. We're getting by on four and five hours of sleep a night. At night, before we left her, I would always ask her when she would be going out the next day. She would always give us a time. This time she said about 10AM.

I told everybody, "I don't believe her." I said, "I want everybody here at 8:00." We're all there at 8:00. We're all dead tired. We've got residence watch on. We've got other agents for the traveling team. I've got the cars out, got the cars lined up." I said, "You know what? Let's all lay down and hope she does not come out until 10AM." Everybody kind of spread out. The CP was a very big hotel room, actually a suite.

*Q: CP?*

WILLIAMS: CP is Command Post. It was right down the hall from her hotel room in the Waldorf-Astoria. In any event we're all there, everyone laying down, sitting in chairs. Everybody's out. As you would expect, at about 8:30 she walked out the door. "Okay, let's go!" I jumped up, put my coat on, and ran out the door. We all did. I forgot my gun. My gun's hanging on the side of the bed. I figured... I called the guy who was my assistant over. I said, "Just stay here next to me."

Anyway, we went to Doubleday bookstore on Fifth Avenue in New York City, and she goes in, and she starts walking down the aisles. She's got an entourage of assistants, a flock of them, maybe a herd. She said, "I'll take that book, that book, that book, that book, that book," and she's buying hundreds, if not thousands of books. I finally said to her, "Mrs. Marcos, who's going to read all these books?" "Oh, my husband's a voracious reader." What? *What???* Thousands and thousands of dollars; they were still piling them into carts when we walked out the door. They were to be delivered to her jet, her airplane, which she had out at Kennedy. I mean, she just spent incredible amounts of money.

If we went someplace with her, everything was paid for all of us. She went to the theater all the time, and I went with her. She loved Van Cliburn. She loved to hang out and socialize with Van Cliburn. He was actually a nice enough guy and rather fun to have around.

**[Break]**

*Q: Okay, we're back, and I think we were talking about Mrs. Marcos.*

WILLIAMS: I forgot to mention the New York Hotel story. Mrs. Marcos went into the Waldorf Astoria, said it was a dump, and went over to the Plaza. She loved to stay in room 35A or B of the Plaza. It was a suite, and it was a magnificent suite I might add. One was like the presidential suite, but I think that's where she stayed, and it was huge, a huge suite. I had never stayed in the Plaza before and I was staying in a room that cost \$450 a night, and it's a relatively small room, and this was back in the middle '70s. I'm thinking, "Oh, my God! Who could have possibly stayed here?" Anyway, suffice it to say, the Plaza was quite nice.

*Q: Was it pretty typical then, or standard procedure, that you would stay at the hotel with the person you were protecting?*

WILLIAMS: Yes and no. Typically we do not stay in the same hotel as the protectee. That was very atypical, and I think I was only there for one night, because we didn't see this coming. It was because of the Waldorf, where she refused to stay, calling it a dump. She went over to the Plaza, and that just took us by complete surprise, because her staff had selected and prepared the Waldorf for her, and then she refused.

Everything went right down the tubes, the whole command post that we had booked there and the Waldorf staff we had inconvenienced. there. Think about this. The U.S. government has already paid for this room. Now I've got to run over to the Plaza and try to get a command post room there at last minute. For whatever reasons, I ended up having to stay at the Plaza that night. Frankly, a \$450 room in the Plaza is about the equivalent of a Holiday Inn room someplace else, but for that night I stayed there. Typically, we don't stay in the same hotel as the protectee. Generally, we'll stay in something that's first of all a whole lot cheaper, but not a dump, but something much more suitable such as a Marriott or someplace like the New York Lowes Summit Hotel. We used to use the Summit Hotel on Lexington Avenue a lot. It is fairly nice, decent

accommodations, nothing special. Then we'd commute over to the Plaza, or Waldorf Astoria, or wherever. We keep a command post going 24 hours a day, so we don't have any need to stay in the same hotel. If possible, the command post room will be adjacent to or across from the protectee's room.

Mrs. Marcos, I want to be very clear, was a very easy lady to work with, a very, very easy lady to work with. She took instructions, and she would always discuss with us what she was doing so there were no surprises. Occasionally she'd walk out at 8:30 or 8:45 and surprise us all, but I suspect she couldn't even remember where she was during that day and didn't remember the night before. She had actually been attacked in the Philippines, therefore, she took her personal security as a serious concern and this made her communicative and easy to work with.

I worked a lot with her. I eventually became her agent-in-charge, just like I had for the Deputy Secretary of State.

*Q: You had several of her visits during this two year period??*

WILLIAMS: Many. Mrs. Marcos would show up in New York every two or three months, almost like clockwork, and would stay typically two to three weeks.

*Q: So, she came a lot to the United States.*

WILLIAMS: Yes she did. She really liked New York and all that it could offer, from theatre to fine dining. She typically would stay in someplace like the Plaza, and that was fine. The Plaza was easy to work. All those big hotels, the Plaza, the Waldorf, were easy to work with because they all have directors of security and they're all so used to this. They know what you need, and they know what they have to do for you. It's easy to work with them. It's when you go to some out-of-the-way-place that the hotels do not understand when you tell them you absolutely need a key to the principal's suite. They don't believe that they should be giving you one, so that's a little tougher, but in somewhere like the Plaza or Waldorf they just hand you a second key for principal's hotel suite. The key stays in the command post in the event of an in-room or other emergency.

We've entered the suite during the day and our agents would accompany the cleaning people while they clean the suite to ensure nothing was planted or left behind, and that nothing was taken.

*Q: You would be protecting the room even when she was not in it.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely right. It's called an RW, the Residence Watch. Generally the RW team would be three or four agents. Always a door post, that is, an agent on the front door to the suite, one on the radio, and the other two available for whatever.

*Q: So there was considered to be a threat against Mrs. Marcos?*

WILLIAMS: Very much so.

*Q: She had had attacks on her life before?*

WILLIAMS: She had least one that I recall. She had been attacked in the Philippines. We have a video of the entire event that we, DS, use as a training tape. She was on the stage, and I remember to this day she was in a white short-sleeve dress, and it was some sort of celebration or presentation. She was there in her official capacity as First Lady honoring somebody, congratulating somebody, and this person walked up on the stage clearly out of place. Others had been coming up in some sort of procession, so perhaps they were giving out diplomas. When the attacker gets close to her, he pulls out a knife and starts stabbing at her and does, indeed, stab her, cutting primarily her arms. When I was working with, he had the scars on her arms from the attack. Eventually, her security people got up on the stage and shot him as I recall, all pretty dramatic. Hence, she took security seriously. She actually wanted us there.

*Q: Did she travel with her own security people?*

WILLIAMS: She did.

*Q: How is it for you when the principal has their own security people?*

WILLIAMS: Depends who they are. Depends very much who they are. The Filipinos were fine to work with. They knew they were in the United States. We, DS, had the lead role and had primary responsibility, and they were there in a secondary capacity. They understood we were the lead agency, and there were rarely issues. We were inclusive and they were part of the team, just in a more supporting role. Of course, we arrogantly reverse that when we go overseas and tell them that we're going to be in charge. No wonder everybody hates us. The Secret Service is famous for this, that is, they were famous for alienating foreign police agencies.

The Filipinos would take secondary positions. We would offer the seats in the follow car or follow cars, if necessary, if that's what it took. The Filipino agent- in-charge would sit in the front seat with me in the limousine. Whether he liked it or not he always got the middle. The driver was typically our agent because it was our car, but I understood his need to be with her, so we'd honor that, and he would sit in the front seat. They were easy to work with and I never had any problems working with them. She did not bring a lot of security people, because she knew we'd give her good protection, and we did. We did give her good protection and she appreciated that.

*Q: Was she generally just in New York or was she traveling around the country?*

WILLIAMS: She would occasionally travel around the country, but that was rare. She would really be pretty much a New York girl. Now, she also did medical treatments. I think virtually all of her medical doctors were there in New York City, which is one of

the reasons she was there every two or three months for this checkup or that or whatever it was. She was also a party girl. The problem was that she would come and stay for two or three weeks, and by the time she left, we were all exhausted.

*Q: That's a long time.*

WILLIAMS: You bet that's a long time, especially after a week or so, agents are burned out. We'd have to start rotating agents out of there and move new agents in. I mean, you're burned out. You're physically and mentally tired, so we would rotate people.

*Q: When you were with an American principal you described how you would go to the meeting sites with him and so forth. When you're with a foreign principal, if she's going to call on the Filipino ambassador or have tea with a friend or whatever it might be, do you take her to the door or the apartment and leave her, or do you actually go in with her?*

WILLIAMS: That's a very good question. No, typically we went in with her, wherever she was at. Embassies are always an exception. You know and I know that the Embassy of the Philippines is extraterritorial, that we have no authority in their embassy. If we took her to her embassy in Washington, DC, I would take her in the front door of the Filipino embassy, and that was it. That's as far as I would go. I would say something like, "Mrs. Marcos, we'll be waiting right here when you're ready to leave." She said, "Okay, I will see you here" or whatever. Now if she went to a private function, including someone's home, we went with her. Only her embassy was excluded. Nowhere else would we leave her alone, never. We went to some private residences, and she had a lot of friends in New York. We never left her. Never. So if she went in to have tea, we were over there, sitting there.

*Q: Right in the same room?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes., or very close nearby. She was rarely out of sight and always within a few feet. If we went in and checked out the place, and there was another lady there and they'd been friends for 20 years, we might wait out in the anteroom or some other very nearby place as long as she was not very far from us. We would never allow her to be out of earshot or very far out of sight. And she completely understood and was never bothered or offended when we were nearby, in fact, I suspect she quite happy we were always nearby.

*Q: And at a public place, say a fancy restaurant?*

WILLIAMS: We were around there. Too much risk there, way too much risk.

The most dangerous thing in the world is to publish your schedule in advance, because when everybody knows where you're going to be, the risk goes up exponentially. It goes back to the story you're much safer just to walk into the crowd unplanned and unannounced, or choosing a restaurant arbitrarily at the last minute. In some ways there's

safety in doing these kinds of spontaneous things, because no one has had a chance to plan out what they were going to do. In a place like a restaurant particularly, because her agenda was not all that well protected, then we consider that an at-risk site. In the case of a restaurant, we might be at surrounding tables or standing off to the side. We would know where the emergency exits were, and if there were a safe holding room. Assuming this was a planned event, likely with reservations, we would have had advance agents at the restaurant a couple hours in advance and working with the restaurant management.

*Q: Someone would have made the reservation for Mrs. Marcos?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely, yes. I remember I did a luncheon with her and Van Cliburn. We went to some five-star restaurant in New York City somewhere, and typically what we would do is we'd take a table or two very near her. We would never be more than a table away from her ever, and if I thought there was even at more risk, then I'd post agents standing. Maybe not standing right at her table, but not far from her, maybe against a close by wall. That has kind of an ominous look to the other people in the restaurant, but you did what you have to do.

I recall Mrs. Marcos wanting to do lunch with Van Cliburn, and it was spontaneous. She just picked a New York restaurant for lunch. So when we got there, and I would have done my normal thing, which is just post agents and wait somewhere else. However, this time she turned to me and said, "Oh, you must join us for lunch." No, I don't want to join you for lunch! She insisted that I join her for lunch, so there I am, sitting there with Van Cliburn, her, and I think some assistant, and the four of us having lunch. You know, it's an uncomfortable position to be in. I just didn't prefer to have that kind of relationship. That's not what I was there for. I didn't want it, wasn't looking for it but also did not want to insult her or make a scene. She was a very gracious lady, as I said. I hope she never reads this transcript. I never thought she was that 150 watt light bulb. Some of the things that she would say would just surprise me. It was an interesting, enjoyable experience, however. You are always working, even when you're sitting next to the principal having lunch.

I haven't even told you about Van Cliburn and going to the theater with him!

*Q: Suppose you were not invited to sit down with her, you said you'd have another table nearby. Would you have a chance to have lunch?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes, certainly, if we thought it was a safe enough environment. Much of the time, however, we might just have coffee so as to not look completely out of place. Other agents were standing or out at the cars. Food, in general, was hit and miss. We would have to usually take turns eating, and it was always a struggle. In fact, she was a gracious lady. She would normally pick up lunch for all of us. That was her standard operating procedure. She'd simply say, "Give me the check for this table and that table over there as well." That was not expected nor was it remotely the norm. We never took advantage of her generosity. She was quite the atypical protectee and a pleasure to work with, really.

*Q: Any other well-known personalities that you were doing protective details for at that early time?*

WILLIAMS: Well-known personalities, no. She was a well-known personality. I did head the protective detail for Ariel Sharon when, I think, was the defense minister [of Israel].

*Q: That's a well-known personality.*

WILLIAMS: But let us come back to Sharon. I have one more Marcos story to share. I went to the theater with Mrs. Marcos and Van Cliburn. I'm in my tuxedo, Van Cliburn was in his tuxedo, Mrs. Marcos is coiffed and she's in her version of a tuxedo. I don't even remember what we were seeing in New York. We actually did that a lot, although we didn't go to the theater with Van Cliburn that much. In fact, this is the only time. Truthfully, I remember this.

All night, certainly all the first act I've got this guy in my ear—Van Cliburn—telling me what the play's all about, and he would not shut up! Let's just make this up: It was a Russian opera. First of all, I don't care, and second of all you're noisy, thirdly, you're spitting. You know, the first intermission, I said, "You know, Mr. Cliburn, that was fascinating, but I'm going to have to send another agent in here for the second act. He said, "Well, Dennis, why?" I said, "I must give this opportunity to my colleagues." Then I went out screaming, "Aaaaaagh! You're going in there!" to whoever my assistant agent-in-charge was. "Get in there! I'm not sitting through another half!" He was a character. *He was really a character.* But he was a nice guy, and, yes, he was a great pianist. He played many times on the piano in Mrs. Marcos' Plaza suite.

She threw parties. She wouldn't just throw ordinary parties. She had incredible parties, and on occasion she flew in Filipino dancers, female dancers. I didn't always know what was going on with all this. She had this incredible *entourage*, and she threw a party and had these girls perform. We were always there, but always as observers, never as party-goers.

*Q: Right in the hotel suite?*

WILLIAMS: Yes

*Q: Must have been some suite!*

WILLIAMS: She was famous for her parties, long before I got involved. The first detail I worked with her, I worked as the deputy to AIC Bob Cronin. Unfortunately, Bob drank a bit too much, sometimes at the wrong time and place. Then Bob made an incredible lapse in judgment. I told him right to his face, "Do not do this, Bob." She invited him to get on her plane with her and fly back to the Philippines, and he rationalized it by saying, "Well, the plane's going to stop in Guam, which is a U.S. possession, so I'll go as her protective agent to Guam." I said, "Bob, do not get on this plane. Do not get on this plane! They're

only refueling in Guam. She doesn't get off the plane, and she's got all her Philippine security with her. Do not get on this plane," and he did.

He ended up in the Philippines. Talk about causing—how should I put this in the vernacular—a shit storm. Oh, my God! There he was in the Philippines, unannounced. The good news was he was her guest. But with no visa, no passport, no nothing. The U.S. embassy has no clue, and “mother” State Department, back here, was saying, “He went where?” He was essentially placed under house arrest when he came back. He never again would work as her agent-in-charge, and actually that is when DS handed it over to me.

Anyway, enough of those. I must have been with her—I'm not kidding you, Pete—half a dozen, eight, ten times in two years. But pretty much a blur at this point.

*Q: Wow.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, wow.

*Q: So her and the deputy secretary are pretty good people, and you said Sharon as well.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, Ariel Sharon. You spend a lot of time protecting people, but they're not necessarily personalities. You know, the foreign minister of the UK comes in. Who was that? Who knows! I remember this from the early '80s when the UK had a little war with Argentina. You recall when Britain and Argentina went at it over the Falkland Islands. UK Foreign Minister Pym came into Washington, and since I was the Chief of the Dignitary Protection Division, I appointed myself as his agent-in-charge. I very much enjoyed Mr. Pym and the one or two British police officers who came with him. He was very easy to work with and we, the United States, were sharing a lot of information with the Brits and Mr. Pym. In any event, most of the people were simply nameless, faceless, at this point in time, functionaries or officials of various foreign governments. Typically, we protected the Israelis all the time, obviously. We also covered many dignitaries from Middle East countries. We covered the various Saudi princes, primarily for political reasons, as we did the British royals. I did Saudi princes, another example of excess money. But most of our protectees did have some level of risk associated with them. Details were sized according to a formal threat assessment.

But Ariel Sharon was something different. Sharon really was different, and I was the agent-in-charge of his protective detail. We had a lot of agents on the Sharon detail, and we considered him a very high risk protectee, for obvious reasons. He was a very controversial guy, and we had lots of problems, because he came with his own security detail as you can imagine, and that was only half the problem. The other half of the problem was the Israeli security people from the embassy, who were in the crowds everywhere we went, carrying those ubiquitous “brief cases.” They were carrying Uzi submachine guns in the cases – we had the same cases for our Uzis – and it got so bad that I called their agent-in-charge over to me, and I said, “I'm going to give you today to get those people out of the crowd with those guns or tomorrow I'll start arresting them. I do not want them out there, they are hazard to us and to the American people. I know that

those are Uzis and I want embassy security and those guns gone... I don't want your friggin' people in the crowds with machine guns, and I will arrest them if they are not gone." He said, "They have diplomatic immunity." I said, "I don't give a fuck. I'll have them on their knees in handcuffs. Get them out of the crowd and do it now." Oh! I was using the vernacular again! And, yes, by the next day they were all gone. Which is good, because I was not bluffing.

I'm not sure I liked working that detail, and I certainly did not at that moment. Israelis are incredibly competent, but very pushy, to the point of irritation if not alienation. They were the pushiest people I ever worked with. I never questioned their competency, though. And if and when they cooperated with you, you could make things work really well. Sharon had a lot of enemies, as you can imagine,, and so we put a lot of people on him.

I remember going to fundraising events in New York City, and the money just flowed into the Israeli coffers. There were literally bag staff, from the Israeli mission to the UN, collecting the money, like a church environment. Seeing all of this, you began to question whether they were Americans or Israelis. Of course, I knew they were Americans, but you had to wonder where their loyalties would really lie in a push and shove situation. The devotion to the State of Israel was something I had never experienced before. I had no real comprehension of the depth of that kind of commitment until I saw it first hand, until I experienced it.

*Q: Was there anybody who you were protecting during this period who actually had any kind of attempt on them while you were protecting them?*

WILLIAMS: Let me think about that for a second. No, not for whom I was the responsible agent –in-charge. There were one or two attempts on other DS protectees, which I had nothing to do with, and neither attack was successful. If protective security is done correctly, following all the correct protocols, risk – to include potential threats – should be mitigated.

*Q: Did you get the feeling sometimes with the people you were asked to protect that this was just being done for diplomatic purposes and there was really no reason at all why security people should be wasting their time?*

WILLIAMS: Sure! It happened all the time. The individual bureaus, the regionals, were promising things they could never deliver, but they promised them. They would promise security for people who really didn't need security, truthfully. In the 1970s we were still a pretty naïve in our thinking, worrying mostly about crazies or some individual with a grudge. Terrorists were not yet on the upswing. There just weren't a lot of folks paying a great deal of attention to a lot of things that were going on in the world, and so we were often promised almost as icing on the cake. To have a protective detail was a status symbol. Turning down these honorific protective details was a constant battle between the Regional Bureaus and DS. I am certain it continues to this day.

Most of what I shared above was from the 1970s, although Foreign Minister Pym was in 1982. In 1976, we left for two overseas tours, one in Tokyo followed by Kingston. In 1981, I came back as the Chief of the Dignitary Protection division, or DP as it was known. As the new Chief, I was forever getting phone calls from the regional bureaus saying, “You know, we have this person coming in, and we want you to protect him,” and I’d say, “From what? No. Why? Why?” Then we would go into this inevitable struggle back and back and forth as to why this person should receive State Department funded protective security when it’s unnecessary and a huge drain on our agent assets. It takes away agents from those people who really do need protection. Sharon, Marcos, the Turkish FM, and many foreign ministers and others that we did protect really did need protection.

The Cuban foreign minister, we’d protect him. When Yasser Arafat came to New York, we protected him. That was a huge protective detail.

*Q: You did the Cuban foreign minister during this period in those first three years?*

WILLIAMS: Sure.

*Q: And how did he react to U.S. security?*

WILLIAMS: He was fine. He had a small force of Cuban security folks who would come with him. They were never problematic. He always stayed at their mission in New York. He never stayed in a hotel, so for the most part for him it was a portal-to-portal. We’d pick him up in the morning, take him around for his UN activities and take him back at night. I remember him being kind of a nonentity, truthfully, and never a problem. But we did consider him to be at-risk so we took his protection seriously.

*Q: You said Yasser Arafat before I interrupted you.*

WILLIAMS: Yasser Arafat.

*Q: At the time, we weren’t speaking to Yasser Arafat, but presumably he could have come to the UN.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, he did. He came to address the UN. The Yasser Arafat protective detail – I’ve told this before to people – is the only time I’ve seen DS agents all wear their bullet proof vests. That included me. I remember going to a gun store in New York City. I wanted to buy, I don’t know, some more speed loaders or some sort of accessory. When I closed the door, all these little guys with yarmulkes are standing behind the counter, and on the back of the door is a picture of Yasser Arafat with a bull’s eye target on him, you know, the concentric circles. We’re protecting Yasser Arafat right now! Of course, I said nothing about this.

In any event that’s the first time we closed down freeways, and we used helicopters. We took the threats against him so seriously, and we had dozens and dozens of agents

working on that protective detail. I don't even remember the specifics other than we closed down the Long Island Freeway to bring him in.

We did something called a rolling road block. I don't know if you're familiar with the term. NYPD would be two miles ahead of us basically pushing everybody off the road, pushing them off the exits, then they'd be a mile behind us letting people get back on, and that's how we brought him into town. In this cradle in the middle and completely devoid of vehicles, we would have the protective security motorcade. We brought him into town with a motorcade, but he wasn't actually in the motorcade. He was in the helicopter. We'd run a fake motorcade.

*Q: You had SY helicopters?*

WILLIAMS: No. We used NYPD helicopters. Even for NYPD this was a big event. While we had lead, they'd work it very well with us. They had emergency services units, essentially SWAT teams, with us everywhere. There was the NYPD Bureau of Security and Special Intelligence, known as BOSSI. They would provide New York City police officers, plainclothes, and BOSSI officers to work with us on these protective details.

**[Break]**

*Q: Today is August 5, 2007, and this is Peter Eicher continuing the interview with Dennis Williams. Denny, when we left off you were talking about Yasser Arafat's protection in New York.*

WILLIAMS: I was talking about the Bureau of Security and Special Intelligence, the BOSSI group in New York. They would eventually evolve into NYPD's Intelligence Division. They were good folks to work with. When somebody like Yasser Arafat came, they would really pull out all the stops. They put as many people on somebody like Yasser Arafat as we did, and for good reason, too. They don't want anything to happen to these folks in New York. It's not that you love these people, it's just that while they're guests in our country, we don't want them harmed. I had to often remind agents that's exactly what we were doing. We were ensuring that our hospitality was not violated regardless of how bad these folks were, and if they died after they left our country, we didn't really care, but not here.

*Q: Did Yasser Arafat also come with his own security people?*

WILLIAMS: He did. They were thugs, no exaggeration, I was up there in New York as the Dignitary Protection Division Chief, not as the agent-in-charge, and there to ensure all went as planned. So I was an involved observer to most of this with Yasser Arafat.

*Q: Are we still talking about your first tour in the '70s or was this the '80s?*

WILLIAMS: 1980s. What I think happened is that he came during the UN General Assembly, UNGA. Every September and October there's a migration to New York City

by diplomats from all over the world, and we and the Secret Service go crazy. This has been going on since the mid- 1940s, when the UN was founded. The UN General Assembly is when many of the world leaders come together in New York City for about a three week period of time. In addition to the UNGA, there are a lot of bilateral and multilateral meetings taking inside and outside the UN. We basically clog up the city, particularly down Manhattan where the UN is located. Typically, DS or then SY, had many more protectees than the Secret Service generally because not that many chiefs of state or heads of government come to the UN, but their foreign ministers do, and other ministers as well.

*Q: That's the basic division, the Secret Service would do the heads of government or chiefs of state and you would do the foreign ministers?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. This actually stems from an historical breach. DS, as SY, has always retained the authority to protect chiefs of state, and heads of government. To this day DS still has that authority, and we have done it.

What happened is in the very early '70s or late '60s, but I think it was early '70s, was that Charles de Gaulle, President of France, came to Chicago, and in those days SY then was truly, truly an understaffed, knuckle-dragging organization of non-professional folks to a great degree, under-resourced, etc. So there in Chicago with SY providing protection for de Gaulle, somebody spit in his face.

*Q: Literally?*

WILLIAMS: Literally. President Nixon at the time, took away the protection of heads of government and chiefs of state from the State Department and gave it to the secret service, and that has never changed. Now at this point in time it's a fairly comfortable division of labor.

We have done heads of government and chiefs of state, when it's been politically correct for us to do that. For example, just a few years ago we protected the president of the Republic of China also known as Taiwan, because the Secret Service and the government would not afford the president of Taiwan the same status as, say, the head of government for the Peoples Republic of China. It all became political. Today, nobody is concerned whether DS has the capability of doing this correctly, but rather only what is politically correct.

*Q: With the Republic of China, we don't recognize them as a state.*

WILLIAMS: That's right. We did not want to afford them officially a head of government status. The Secret Service knows that we have this authority as does the White House, and we have used it on more than one occasion. But I think the White House has become very comfortable with the split. The Secret Service has justified hundreds of agents on the protective activities for chiefs of state, heads of government,

but the fact of the matter is far fewer of them come to this country in a year than all of the other ministers. DS is the true preeminent foreign dignitary protection law enforcement agency, as it should be. Actually, I believe all foreign dignitary protection, including heads of government and chiefs of state should be done by DS and the Secret Service should focus on USG dignitaries, the President, Vice President, and others.

*Q: You were talking about New York in September. Did DS/SY at that point have enough people to protect everybody who was coming?*

WILLIAMS: No. We've never had enough people to protect them all. To this day we still don't. Well, let's say there were a lot of escort details. Now I don't want to jump to the future, but there is a need to transition you to where we're going to go in the 1980s anyway. Eventually, we would start borrowing U.S. Marshals to help us and ATF agents to help us. Now the Marshals love to do this because this was something so totally different for them. They got training from us on how to do protection. The ATF agents, who were then Treasury Department agents were always treated like shit by the Secret Service, so they loved to work with us. We never gave them little pins that said "OTA" on it. Do you have any idea what "OTA" means, Peter??

*Q: I do not.*

WILLIAMS: It stood for Other Treasury Agents – or somewhat akin to being a leper. The Secret Service would not give them the same pins, protective pins, to wear that they had. They wanted everyone to know who was a *real* Secret service agent and who was an OTA; the Red Badge of Courage right there in New York. They came over to us, on a loan basis, and we gave them the same pins that we were wearing, and they loved us, and they never wanted to leave us. Ultimately, we would in the late '70s, start borrowing agents and marshals and whomever from other agencies, and Secret Service does it too, by the way. Nobody can handle the crush of the UN General Assembly, when you're facing 20 to 30 protective details simultaneously in the city. That's enormous in terms of resources. DS literally has hundreds of agents in New York for the UNGA, and borrows additional agents and marshals to supplement. It is a huge resource commitment by the Department.

*Q: Would you be out there accompanying people right into the UN building to the General Assembly?*

WILLIAMS: No. You would accompany them into the building, and then you'd drop them off. UN security would pick up, because it is diplomatic establishment.

*Q: Sort of like an embassy, where you'd drop them at the door.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. We'd go off and have lunch in the cafeteria or whatever. We'd have somebody out there in case the person got sick or something happened so we could all be regrouped fairly quickly. Typically, they'd say, "I'm going to be here for the next four hours, and I plan to leave about 5:00." You could pretty much count on that. The

motorcades stay out front. Actually, the motorcades would go down below, and we'd stage them in the parking garages, and we'd bring them back up when we knew we were getting close to the time to be going. But given the status of the UN, we treated it pretty much as if it were an embassy, i.e., and extraterritorial location which in fact it was.

*Q: It sounds like a pretty exciting couple of years.*

WILLIAMS: It was. After two years of this at some point somewhere in there Terri said, "This is getting really old. You come home, I do your laundry, I wash your underwear, and you leave again?" There was a lot of truth in that. We made a lot of money, made a lot of money back then, overtime allowed us to buy our first townhouse in Reston, Virginia in a year, because of all the money I was making. You look back and you said, "They hired me for \$16,700. Wow. But back in 1974 that was a lot of money. Add to that another \$10,000 in overtime a year, because of all the work we were doing, but you earned it because most of the time you were just so tired you couldn't move.

### **Tokyo, Japan, Assistant Regional Security Officer**

*Q: On duty all the time. At that time did they have anything like an open assignments process as you were starting to look at the next thing you wanted to do in the Foreign Service?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, it was open in the sense that when I heard that Fred Lecker turned down Assistant Regional Security Officer (ARSO), Tokyo, I walked into the open door of the Director's office and said, "I'll go, and I'll go next month. And, oh by the way, I speak Japanese." He said, "You're going to Tokyo, kid." That was the SY/DS assignment process.

*Q: When was this?*

WILLIAMS: 1976.

*Q: Fred Lecker was whom?*

WILLIAMS: Fred Lecker was an agent who was assigned to be the ARSO in Tokyo, and at the last minute, because of an issue with his wife like I-don't-want-to-go-to-Tokyo, he turned the assignment down. Fred Lecker was an agent out of the Philadelphia Field Office.

*Q: I guess I got it wrong. I thought Fred Lecker was the one who was giving you the assignment.*

WILLIAMS: No. It was the then Director of SY/DS, Victor Dikeos.

*Q: Who made these assignments?*

WILLIAMS: Vic Dikeos. He was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for SY/DS. Remember, back then SY was an Office in the Bureau of Administration.

*Q: In fact, then, that suggests why appointments were being made by SY rather than some other mysterious bureaucratic process.*

WILLIAMS: To this day, assignments are being made by DS, and then rubber-stamped by the Department. We're jumping a little bit into the future about assignments panels, so in fact for seven years I sat on the assignments panel to assign people all over the world. DS would do the assignments, but HR would put its *imprimatur* on that assignment. There could be objections from the employee at the DS stage, or there could be objections from the employee when it went over to HR to the real people who made the *official* assignments. This is quite rare though.

*Q: In this instance, you heard of an opening, you went and asked for it and were assigned, so there's no broader bidding process you needed to work out.*

WILLIAMS: No. It was very hard on Terri. We had two kids and I was gone all the time or at least what seemed like all the time. These were not just overseas trips with the Deputy Secretary or taking maps to Cairo or wherever, but when I was back I was gone. I was gone up to New York with some foreign dignitary or out to Los Angeles, down to Texas, out to Chicago, and everywhere else. I would guess I was literally gone at least 50% of the time.

Oh, I didn't tell you my Chinese story in Los Angeles.

*Q: Well, if you want to digress, why don't we get one more story before we move on to the next assignment.*

WILLIAMS: This is worth it! I was the agent-in-charge of a group of Chinese. I also became the Chinese expert. I don't know how that happened either, but somehow I started getting stuck with every Chinese group that came into town. I had some group of Chinese, I can't ever remember who they were. I mean, at one point I had the Chinese women's basketball team – that group I could never forget.

*Q: That must have been just about the time we were opening relations with China.*

WILLIAMS: I went to China when Henry Kissinger opened relations with China.

*Q: Which was during what time frame?*

WILLIAMS: About '74, '75.

*Q: You probably have a few words about that as well!*

WILLIAMS: Those were the days when the Secret Service was still protecting the Secretary of State. That would change fairly soon afterwards . They were doing it under the aegis that he was the National Security Advisor. You will recall that Kissinger held two titles, that of Secretary of State and National Security Advisor. The Secret Service was already protecting him as the National Security Advisor when he moved over to State to become the Secretary of State, so they just continued with him. It is also what Henry wanted.

*Q: I think they were separate positions.*

WILLIAMS: They were.

*Q: He was National Security Advisor and then came to be Secretary of State.*

WILLIAMS: But initially he did not give up his National Security Advisor status. Anyway, he kept the Secret Service. He kept Secret Service, and that caused huge problems for us. Strangely, we ended up with Mrs. Kissinger, and I would go with Mrs. Kissinger on trips. Nancy was a nice lady, and very easy to work with.

*Q: But at the moment, you were in Los Angeles with a group of Chinese.*

WILLIAMS: I was in Los Angeles with a group of Chinese. We had been doing stuff all over the city, but this night we were at a social event in a private individual's home, and we were all there. We had agents inside with the Chinese delegation, and we had agents outside on perimeter posts.

I'm having flashbacks, Peter, because I also was in San Francisco when Squeaky Fromme decided to shoot Gerald Ford. I was there that day at the hotel with another group of Chinese.

But in any event, in Los Angeles we've got the Chinese, and I get a radio call that said, "Denny, you better get out here. We've got this car circling the block, and when he comes around he turns his lights off, and he creeps up the street. He's coming around now for the fourth time."

I went out, kind of stood in the shadows and watched this car creeping up the street. Okay. I said, "Okay, team, this is what we're going to do. When he comes around the next time, which he inevitably he will, we're going to bring the follow-up car out into the street, and I want you to hit the lights, bring on the light bar." I said, "We're going to approach car from each side and to the rear. We'll approach the side doors of the vehicle, because we could see there were only two people in the vehicle."

Sure enough, he comes around for the fifth time, he comes creeping up the street, turns his lights off, so he gets closer and closer and closer, and then our follow car backed right out in the middle of the street and turned on his red lights. The guy panics and hits the accelerator. It's like "Where are you going to go? You're just going to hit our car!" He

goes 30 feet and hits the brakes, and now he's in dead panic. I approach from the driver's side and another agent approached from the passenger side. For some reason, I'm not sure why, the dome light went on in the car. I don't know if one of the two of them tried to start to open a door. That actually spooked me truthfully. The dome light went on. He looked back at me, saw me approaching and went down on the seat. I said, "Screw this!" Out comes the .357. Nuts to this nonsense and approached the window and literally standing there like this saying, "Don't move. Put both hands on the steering wheel, now" and you can just imagine who it was.

*Q: No, I can't.*

WILLIAMS: The FBI.

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: One of the greatest moments of my entire career, and I'm sure he was peeing right there in his pants. I made him roll down the window and said, "All right, with your right hand reach across, roll down the window." He rolls down the window. I said, "Where are your credentials?" He can't find them. I said, "With your left hand go down on the seat and find your credentials. Don't do anything stupid. As far as I know, you're nobody."

He, in fact, finds his credentials. Now why doesn't he have his credentials in his pocket? I don't know. I said, "Hand them out." FBI agents are instructed, "Never give up your credentials. Never hand them to somebody. You hold them and show them, but you never hand them over." I said, "Hand them out." "Here, take it!" They're beside themselves. They don't know what to do. I said, "What are you guys doing here?" They're intelligence guys collecting license plate numbers off cars. Oh wonderful. Well, they took off. We let them go. Although, you really want to beat them with a club for stupidity and for what could have happened.

Then they came back. They pleaded, "You can't report this. You just can't report this!" I said, "I have reported it." I said, "Of course I would have to report it! We pulled guns on you guys tonight. You never told us you were doing this stuff. Of course we're reporting it." "We'll be killed" they said. "I don't care. You shouldn't be doing this crap. This is how people get killed. Shot and killed." That was the kind of stuff they were doing. They would not—they would *not*—talk to other agencies, they would not coordinate, and then we'd catch them. You could go apoplectic over stuff like this.

*Q: One more thing, you were talking about the trip to China with Kissinger. Was that still in your first assignment?*

WILLIAMS: It was.

*Q: By that time, we had already opened relations and he was going, so it wasn't the secret trips he had done before.*

WILLIAMS: It wasn't the secret trip, but it was the first official trip, and it was a big trip. They asked for volunteers, to staff a classified holding room. I wasn't assigned in an agent capacity to go. What do the Europeans call it?

*Q: The bubble kind of thing?*

WILLIAMS: It's where you store all your classified information. It is called a registry. Europeans use the term classified registry. You don't store things in your offices. You store classified materials in the registry and you check them out from there. You go down and get it from the registry. They asked for volunteers to run a registry out there for the classified information. It was an unarmed trip out. You would just be controlling the classified documents, and I thought, "This is cool. I want to do this not because I want to work in a registry, but because I wanted an opportunity to see Tiananmen Square, and you know they took us to all the state dinners. Unbelievable. All of the state dinners!

*Q: Very interesting! So you were one of the first Americans in China!*

WILLIAMS: I was. Somehow they thought that because I spoke Japanese that had something to do with Chinese. Japanese has nothing to do with Chinese! In any event I remember one of those non-coincidences taking place. I'd just walked into the hotel that I was going to be staying at, Chinese hotel obviously, and a guy comes up behind me and taps me on the shoulder, says, "Ah, welcome to China, Mr. Williams!" He had been the political officer with the Chinese Girls Basketball Team. He knew exactly where to be. There is no such thing as a coincidence with this kind of stuff. He knew exactly who was coming and where I'd be.

*Q: Very interesting, thank you. Next time we'll continue I guess with your assignment to Japan.*

WILLIAMS: We're off to Japan. Sayonara!

*Q: Thank you.*

**[Break]**

*Q: Today is August 12, 2007, and this is Peter Eicher continuing the interview with Dennis Williams for the ADST oral history project. Denny, when we left off last time you were about to go to your first Foreign Service tour in Japan. Can we just say a couple sentences to start out so we can check and make sure you're recording properly?*

WILLIAMS: Testing one, two, three.

*Q: Okay, so remind us what year it was when you were off to Japan?*

WILLIAMS: 1976. I was just finishing up two years in the Washington Field Office, and Terri, to be very candid, was quite tired of me coming home, getting my clothes washed, repacking a suitcase, and that's all I was really doing for the two years I was here.

*Q: Were you both happy to go back to Japan again?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, we were. Actually I was not assigned to Japan. They assigned a guy by the name of Fred Lecker to Japan, whom I mentioned previously. I worked many protective details with Fred, and as good luck or bad luck would have it, his wife absolutely balked, said she did not want to go live in Japan. She was a school teacher, and she wanted to continue teaching, so for better or for worse, Fred Lecker who had been assigned to Tokyo gave up the assignment. I made an appointment to see the Director of SY/DS. You already know I volunteered to go in like 30 days, and so we were assigned to Tokyo. It really was as simple as that. Those days are, well, long gone.

*Q: The position was assistant RSO?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. There were two positions in Tokyo. Today there must be half a dozen, I guess, but those were the old days, and not necessarily the good days. But there were two positions. We arrived in September 1976, because I volunteered in August, and we went very soon thereafter. Anyway, I worked with a very smart guy there, a guy by the name of Peter Roche, and he was indeed a very, very bright guy, somebody with whom I have maintained contact over the years. He would stay a year, and another senior RSO would come in and replace him, Lance Putney, another bright, capable guy. A great place to learn.

*Q: A relatively uneventful tour in Tokyo?*

WILLIAMS: I thought I learned a lot. There was a lot to be learned. Tokyo is a big embassy. The embassy had just moved. Just before I got there they moved from the old embassy, that many thought had been haunted and where WWII prisoners were kept in the basement. It was like the old Japanese railroad station or something. It was a strange building. I went down and looked at it once and decided I didn't want to go back. There were things in the basement...strange things. Water down there and tunnels and who knows what.

The new embassy, however, was built not too far away from the old one, and a lot closer to the embassy housing compound. Almost everybody in Japan, in Tokyo at least, lives in embassy housing, because the local economy is so expensive they can't afford to live out. We were no exceptions. We lived in Greer House, an apartment building on the compound. It was fine; it was nice, and we had no complaints.

I learned several things in Tokyo. One, I learned the structure of the Foreign Service, which I'd not really known other than the hypothetical. I learned that we worked for the administrative minister counselor, and we had a wonderful lady, Lee Anderson, who was our admin counselor in Tokyo. As a parenthetical aside, Lee had been a school teacher in

the days when it only took two years of college to be a school teacher and then subsequently joined the Foreign Service. She was a truly delightful lady.

What else did I learn? I learned a lot of things about security in general. Tokyo was not a surprise to us since we'd only been there a few years ago, so it wasn't much of a cultural shock. This time we were making a few more dollars than we were in the military. We were able to get around a whole lot better, so a lot more sightseeing; everything from back up to Mount Fuji to the Hakone springs, to all over. We drove all over.

Driving in Tokyo is incredibly challenging. The roads are congested, and even if you read or speak some Japanese, it's still confusing...very confusing. Not unlike driving in Washington, D.C. or New York, or Los Angeles or any other huge metropolitan area. Tokyo sits on the Kanto plain and so it's fairly flat, and it spreads out, and that's exactly what has happened. Much of Japan is mountainous, but the Kanto plain is not. Much of where Japan's population is on the Kanto plain from Tokyo to Yokohama to various parts. We did get around that plain as best we could.

*Q: Did you use your Japanese much?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, but outside the embassy. Everybody at the embassy spoke English. All the Japanese spoke excellent English, so the only time you'd use Japanese truly is when you drove out of the city. Even in downtown Tokyo it was hard to use Japanese. As I think I told you last time, you'd ask something in Japanese, and they'd look at you and answer in English, because they wanted to practice their English as well. But there were lots of opportunities to have conversations. The Japanese were not reticent about talking, practicing and learning. They were good learners too, and they were quick learners because some of the sounds we have in English are not replicated in Japanese. They don't have "L"s in Japanese. It's very hard for them to work with some of our words particularly those with "L"s. The word "roll" or "lollipop" is nearly impossible for them to pronounce.

*Q: I've heard the jokes. Let me ask you a little bit about the embassy. Do you recall who the ambassador was?*

WILLIAMS: We had two of them while I was there. Who was the senate majority leader?

*Q: Mike Mansfield?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, of course, Mike Mansfield. He came out there, and he was high powered. To be very candid, he was a very old guy when he got there, but he had a real love of Japan, and he was a good ambassador. You've got to remember I'm working from a low vantage point. I don't go to the country team meetings. I'm not nearly as privy to the ambassador and others as I would be subsequently, but this time around from my vantage point, everybody seemed to like him. The ambassador's residence was only 500 feet from the embassy. It was all in the same compound and he fortunately only had

to walk back and forth or he was driven around to the front entrance at his house. In Mansfield's case he was mostly driven around. You could walk, but it was a little arduous of a walk up and down some hills, and I don't think he did them.

*Q: You said you didn't go to the country team meetings in those days when the security section, you said, was still part of the admin section. Did the RSO go to country team meetings or do you even remember?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, the senior RSO went to the country team meetings. In his absence, I would go, so I did gain some limited experience on how country teams functioned, but not a lot.

You know, when I entered the Foreign Service they'd only just stopped secret ratings of your spouse, and they were still doing those behind-your-back one-page officer ratings that you never saw, the old confidential ratings.

*Q: Really! Those had stopped by time I joined. I joined before you, I think. That's interesting...I wonder if you had a separate system.*

WILLIAMS: I saw one. I saw one of my old confidential ratings. As it would turn out, somebody, one of my friends, found it years and years later in a file, and he sent it to me. Oh, yeah! Those were the old days, certainly not the good old days, I don't think. But in any event, this was my introduction into the Foreign Service. I remember most of the people I worked with in Tokyo were very nice, the DCM in particular, and his name's evading me, too. I can picture him. First name is Bill. I can picture him. This is when I realized there were really smart, capable people in the Foreign Service.

But it was not difficult in Tokyo. There were not the trying issues of terrorism. We would have occasional demonstrations by various Japanese left-wing, anti-American groups, to include the Japanese communist party. Once a month they'd hold a parade or demonstration in front of the embassy and invariably orderly, because the Japanese riot police were all over them. The Japanese riot police were not a joke. If those folks got out of line, those riot police stepped in, and they were swinging clubs and doing damage.

Other than that, it was kind of an uneventful time, we learned how to acclimate into the Foreign Service, and I think Terri learned that she loved it. That's really a key feature here.

We had a presidential visit when I was there. Real excitement!

*Q: Which president? Who would that have been?*

WILLIAMS: Jimmy Carter. I remember that he had Zbigniew Brzezinski. Remember him?

*Q: Of course.*

WILLIAMS: Zbigniew Brzezinski. The thing I remember most about that visit was that first of all, it proved to me that the Japanese police, as good as they ostensibly looked on the surface, really didn't understand a lot of things. They were told that they faced outward from the motorcade, that their job was not to sit there and watch the motorcade, but rather to watch the crowd, hence their backs turned to the motorcade. As the president went down through the tunnel, all the police were facing the wall of the tunnel! They just did not quite get it.

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: And when they came out and they were still outside the tunnel, and just because of the shape of the landscaping, they were still facing a wall! I thought, "They missed this one completely. Totally, totally missed this one." That works well when you're facing crowds, but you don't have to face the wall when you're in a tunnel...so they didn't quite get that.

The other thing I remember to this day is Zbigniew Brzezinski with a folder in his hand marked "Top Secret," and I could see it. I wasn't very far from it. He was clearly flustered by something. He did not want to be carrying this around. So he walks over to a Japanese policeman, and he thrusts the TS file into his hands and says something like, "Here. Watch this for me." I went over and said, "Perhaps I can watch that for you." Unbelievably stupid!

*Q: That's interesting. Okay.*

WILLIAMS: It was, but there were very few Secretary of State or other high level visits. They were very rare. Most of what we did in Tokyo were investigations, Marine Security Guard drills, monitor demonstrations, handle an occasional crazy in the Consular section, and visit the consulates. Overall, pretty mundane stuff. Of course, we did a lot of sightseeing, visits to the military PXs and commissaries, and other pretty routine stuff. Tokyo was a great first assignment but save an occasional earthquake, pretty boring.

*Q: Investigations of what?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, typically background investigations. There's very little passport and visa fraud in Japan as you could imagine.

*Q: So background investigations of Americans who needed security clearances?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, people at the embassy. Typically, American staff who had been there or were there then. So we did those. There was little, as I said, in the way of passport and visa fraud. Of course we weren't doing terrorist investigations, because they really didn't exist as they do now.

We did a lot of training with the Marine Security Guards. I learned how to control a Marine Detachment. Having been in the military it was fairly easy for me, but just learning what the Marines would and would not do. We had to handle occasional problems in the consular section, and we did have them, but never caused by Japanese. Problems were always caused by third country nationals or Americans.

We actually got a panic alarm from the consular section, from the American services side. That was very unusual, so I actually got out my gun, put it on, got a couple of Marines, and went down there. They had an American citizen to whom they had loaned a hundred dollars, and he was an obnoxious ass. He brought the hundred dollars back in pennies and dumped them all over the counter. Now where the hell do you get a hundred dollars in pennies in Japan? I have no clue how he did that, but he did. I guess just to be an obnoxious ass he dumped them all over the counter...just pennies everywhere!

I walked up, tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "You're leaving." He said, "You going to make me leave?" I said, "No, no I'm not." I said, "But these two Marines behind me are going to make you leave." There were, in fact two Marines behind me! So we threw him out. I literally had the Marines jack him up under each arm and haul his ass out to the gate and push him out the gate. We were only one step away from having him arrested, but if I had him arrested then American citizen services would have to go out and visit him. So that seemed a little ludicrous.

We had a fire on the housing compound while I was there. Strangely, they still had housing on the embassy housing compound for Japanese servants. Think about that, really the old days! If you're a domestic worker --- a and that's before we had domestic help -- if you were a domestic worker for the US Embassy, you could live on the US Embassy housing compound. Wow. The fire raged through those domestic workers' quarters, and I think one or two of them were killed...bad. It was an old wooden structure, perhaps dating back or before WWII, and once the fire took, there was no way to put it out. The building burned down in minutes. A terrible tragedy.

*Q: Did you have kids by that time?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, we had Chris and Jeff.

*Q: How was it to have children?*

WILLIAMS: Fine, as it turns out we were on the housing compound as I said, right out our back sliding glass doors in the Greer House was the swimming pool and there was a day care center there as well. There were nearby playgrounds. The housing compound was really set up for families. At the other end was a *dojo*. You know what a *dojo* is, Peter?

*Q: That's where you train in karate or whatever.*

WILLIAMS: Correct, martial arts training. In fact, for the two years I was there, I took lessons in judo and ju-jitsu, ju-jitsu being a combination of karate, judo and aikido. Aikido is joint techniques. Ju-jitsu is really self-defense, and it effectively combines all three of those Japanese martial arts disciplines. I managed to do a black belt in ju-jitsu and a brown belt in judo while I was there.

*Q: That's good. Professionally now, were you dealing much with the Japanese police or Japanese security services?*

WILLIAMS: No, not really. Most of those dealings were done with the senior RSO as much as they were done at all. We had two Japanese investigators, both of whom were paid more than the senior RSO, I might add, because of the exchange ratio. The two FSNs investigators had been there forever. They were both incredibly competent. You know, they really took care of things. The Japanese police were absolutely helpful in assisting us with virtually anything, so there was very little stress, very little strain, and few risks other than the occasional demonstrations.

We were a little bit concerned about the intelligence threat because Japan has virtually no laws governing intelligence activities. We did have some issues. We did have some counter intelligence issues there, because we did have some embassy people, a couple of folks who appear to have been targeted by Russian intelligence services, but we handled it. As soon as we went after their operative, everything disappeared. It wasn't a big deal.

*Q: This was a three year assignment?*

WILLIAMS: Two year. When you're an RSO you do only two years for your first tour. Then we had to do our bid list. I'm trying to think if there's anything else.

### **Kingston, Jamaica, Regional Security Officer**

*Q: So this would be the first time you were actually doing a bid list then.*

WILLIAMS: It was.

*Q: That's an interesting experience, I guess.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. I'd never done a bid list. I hadn't bid on Tokyo. I just went in, prostrated myself and begged, and that worked like a champ. This time around I had to do a real bid list. The only thing I remember is that my sixth, last post on my bid list was Kingston, Jamaica. I have no recollection what one through five were, but they weren't Kingston!

*Q: So you were bidding on six? At that time, if I recall correctly, you had to do six bids, and you got your number six.*

WILLIAMS: Number six. I knew nothing about Kingston, Jamaica other than having just seen it in a James Bond movie.

*Q: Bet it conjured up images of some nice beaches.*

WILLIAMS: It looked good. It really did! I found out subsequently that they referred to the beach on which that Doctor No was filmed as James Bond Beach. Doctor No was either the first or second Bond movie.

*Q: I think it was the first, and wasn't it filmed partly in Japan as well?*

WILLIAMS: No, that was *You Only Live Twice*.

*Q: What year did you transfer from Japan to Kingston?*

WILLIAMS: 1978. I'd went alone in the summer, I think in August. Terri stayed behind for some very minor medical procedure. But anyway, she couldn't schedule it in time, so I went ahead, got down there, actually moved into the house that we would have. It was a single family home, small but nice with a small swimming pool. I can't remember the address. We would later move to a much bigger house in Cherry Hills, or something like that. But our first Jamaican house was quite nice, quite livable. Typical of all Jamaican houses, it had walls around it. It was smallish, but very comfortable actually. I was there alone with really nothing more than our air shipment and stuff from GSO. I guess GSO provided us with furniture so, yes, I had furniture.

*Q: The assignment was as RSO this time?*

WILLIAMS: RSO. In fact when I got there, there were only about 60 American staff assigned to the embassy total, and I was the only DS person.

*Q: It was DS by this time?*

WILLIAMS: No, it was not. It was SY. I just use "DS" because I have been using it for 30 years and because the old SY is long gone. .

*Q: Before you get to Jamaica, if I could just stop you for a second, did you have any kind of training or anything between Japan and Jamaica?*

WILLIAMS: No, and I didn't mention that. I really didn't mention it in the first go-around there was both basic agent training and basic RSO training. Fortunately the US Army had trained me in four months of special agent training. What State provided subsequently was pretty sophomoric, truthfully, but there was RSO training, and that was actually pretty good. By then they had gotten RSO classes, I think up to about eight weeks.

*Q: By then you mean a course you had taken before you went to Japan or...?*

WILLIAMS: Before I went to Japan. I was on a direct transfer to Tokyo. There was really no home leave.

*Q: To Jamaica?*

WILLIAMS: Sorry, to Jamaica, from Japan to Jamaica. I know we stopped in route in Hawaii and spent a week or so in Hawaii and had a wonderful time there, then on back. I left Terri with the kids at her parents' house in Naperville, Illinois. I may have stayed there a week or so, but then I took off and flew down to Jamaica.

They had a TDY agent in Kingston who was filling in as RSO, so they were anxious to get me down there as soon as possible. That TDYer ingratiated himself so well with the ambassador that the ambassador asked for my assignment to be cancelled! He wanted my assignment cancelled, and Steve Jacobs who was there as the fill-in, to stay there permanently. Fortunately, DS supported me and Steve left.

My first ambassador in Jamaica, I think, was Fred Irving. He would turn out to be mentally unstable, and he would eventually be removed from post by a Med team. I'm choosing my words very carefully here. I got there. There were tremendous problems. There weren't, or hadn't been, any effective RSOing there for some time. You always speak ill of your predecessors. There were just so many things that weren't being done, and no one really had addressed the problem of residential and personal security. Those were becoming huge issues in Jamaica.

I liked to tell American embassy people arriving there that, "you will be mugged or robbed or be stolen from sometime during your tour here. You will be. That's just the way it is." Tours there were two years long. But the truth of the matter is if you lived in a house, you'd be hit twice, and if you lived in an apartment you might be hit zero. So those people who lived in single family dwellings were much more at risk and would invariably have an incident or two. We did.

None of that had really been addressed, plus having what was an emotionally unstable ambassador who went on yelling and screaming binges. He called me up to his office one time, and I was convinced, whatever I had done, I can't remember what it was, that I was going to be fired, that he was going to tell me, "Leave post," because he was just, he just really was crazy. That's the only nice way to put it. He was a crazy, crazy guy, and not in a nice way.

*Q: Was he a career person?*

WILLIAMS: He was. As happenstance would have it, within about three weeks, out of nowhere flies in a two-man Med team of psychiatrists, and two weeks later he was gone.

*Q: Presumably somebody had asked for this team before. It wasn't just a coincidence.*

WILLIAMS: It was not a coincidence. He was notorious inside the embassy, and I suspect by then extra-embassy as well. He really was an unstable man, and he really needed to be taken out of there. He was demoralizing the staff as you can just imagine, screaming and yelling. I really have no tolerance for people screaming and yelling. I was scared to death that he was going to turn and start screaming, yelling and throwing stuff at me, and I would lay him out on the floor. I'm not a screamer and yeller. I don't understand how folks can do that to other folks. It's about as rude as you can get.

In any event he was gone, and Lorrie Lawrence would come in as the new ambassador. Lorrie Lawrence was one of the nicest, finest most decent human beings I'd ever worked with. He was a 180 degree change, a super great guy, and I was given the opportunity to watch a good ambassador at work. In a country where the world wasn't waiting with bated breath every time we did something in Jamaica, but there were enough issues and concerns.

Marijuana was coming through, being shipped from the country, transshipped through the country. As a lot of marijuana is grown in Jamaica, as you well know, it was a constant problem to try and stop that. Harder drugs from central and south America also transshipped through Jamaica.

*Q: Is that something you as RSO had a role in?*

WILLIAMS: No, not really. We actually had one DEA agent there as well. Now, this is the first time I'm working in an embassy with another federal law enforcement officer. His job was really just liaison with Jamaican police. I mean, he couldn't do anything either, that is, he really can't conduct criminal investigations in Jamaica. Occasionally I would work issues with him and he would work them with me, because I was the only other person he could go to. We did mutually support each other.

Mostly, the things I would work in Jamaica were consular fraud issues. We had huge, huge problems with passport and visa fraud. Steve Mann was the consular fraud officer – consular officer in an investigative position. Parenthetically, Steve would go on to become an Ambassador and he invited me to his swearing in ceremony on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the Department. As I said, Steve was the consular fraud officer, and he and I formed a kind of an unbreakable partnership in Kingston to try to take on some of these issues with passport and visa fraud. I probably spent a good deal, half of my time, working these issues. Proving that people were not who they said they were and things like that, working with the consular actors to try to prevent some of these very, very bad actors from getting into the country.

Jamaican posses, which I know you're familiar with are very violent. Individually Jamaicans are cowards, but collectively they can be ruthless and brutal. Posses, which unfortunately are quite prevalent in New York City, are loose affiliations of various gangs. We had a lot of issues at the embassy. We had a lot of American citizen services issues worked by the embassy, because there were so many Americans in Jamaica traveling and visiting, getting doped up, one thing or another. We were constantly on our

toes. I lost half of my Marine Security Guard detachment because of dope. This would happen much later in my tour there, because we found them smoking dope. We did a locker search as military rules allowed, and three of them—three out of seven—had drugs in their lockers. I had told them repeatedly, *repeatedly*, that if you feel like you've got to go smoke dope, go find someplace and go smoke dope, but do not, *do not* bring it to the embassy or to the Marine House or anywhere else, because if you do, you're gone. They were gone. And they were good Marines. That was my first kind of experience in having to fire people. Marines, in this case. The ambassador ordered them out of the country, of course.

*Q: This I presume could lead to a dishonorable discharge?*

WILLIAMS: I presume it did lead to a dishonorable discharge. I really did not know what became of any of them. The Marine Master Sergeant and I had to do what we had to do. Nevertheless, it was very sad because these were good kids. However, they knew my rules and they broke them. Pretty stupid.

*Q: You didn't have local investigatory powers, so when you were running into passport and visa fraud, you couldn't actually go out on the local economy, if you want to call it that, and do an investigation?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct, officially that is. You could get away with about anything, because I was really good friends with the police in Jamaica, with the Jamaican Constabulary Force, all the way up to the deputy chief with whom I routinely had lunch. There was not much we could not officially or unofficially do in Jamaica. For the senior officers, I gave them Scotch as Christmas gifts and help get them visas for the U.S.

I could pretty much do almost anything I wanted. I ran counterfeit case leads for the Secret Service, and I went out and did the investigation. I took the Marine Detachment Commander with me and was confronted by three guys with machetes wrapped in newspapers. A common trick is that they wrap the machetes, and they hold them over their shoulder harmlessly like this. But when you swing that machete, that newspaper doesn't count for anything. That blade cuts right through, and you're dead. I thought, "Oh, God, I'm going to be dead here!" I'm wearing an ankle holster with a .38 special in it, and I'm wondering, "How am I going to bend over and grab my ankles without causing suspicion?" The Detachment Commander is also wearing an ankle holster, but he stayed back about 10 feet or so.

**[End Tape 2, Side A]**

**[Start Tape 2, Side B]**

*Q: It's August 12, 2007. This is the second side of Tape 2 with Dennis Williams, and he was just being confronted by gentlemen with machetes.*

WILLIAMS: As I started to say when the tape went off, the Detachment Commander who I had asked to go along with me because I knew I might need somebody to back me up. We both had weapons permits for Jamaica, and these are three very nasty looking people. He did stay back, he did get his foot up on our car bumper so he could more easily access his weapon. They didn't answer my questions – how stunning, I am shocked! My only defense, because I knew what they were going to do with those paper clad machetes if they didn't like us or we did something wrong, they were going to swing them. I got up into his face so he couldn't swing it. If you get close enough to somebody they can't swing.

As it turns out they were not who we were after, who we were looking for. I don't know that I ever did find who I was after, and after a while, the cases just start blurring., However, between drugs, counterfeiting dollars, phony passports, and fraudulent visas, there was plenty to do. The investigative load down in Jamaica was enormous and way more than one person could do. But it wasn't really the primary problem in Jamaica.

*Q: Did you have an ARSO to help you?*

WILLIAMS: I did not. It was standard for a post that was that size, about 60 Americans and maybe another 100 FSNs, that there was only one RSO. After I left, two RSOs were assigned to Jamaica, because the post would grow from about 60 to 100, you just couldn't provide the services needed. One RSO was way too few from day one, the day I got there. By the way, there are now three or four RSOs assigned to Kingston.

In addition, we had enormous problems with residential security. My regional security supervisor was Roger Robinson and he came to Kingston and was of great help in setting the first-ever residential security program. This was the first residential security program set up anywhere in the world, simply because crime was rampant and so out of control. A lot of money was available for residential security. The Kingston residential security program would become a benchmark for DS and the Department. And I should say there was an event that precipitated this. A new peace corps director showed up. Can't remember his full name, but Don was his first name. He was a black gentleman. He was blind. He was married to a blonde white woman. Both of them were sort of like flower children from the '60s. They lived kind of like hippies, truthfully. They had a couple of kids there, and he asked me to take a look at, that is, survey the house that he had selected. As the RSO, I would survey all new residences – this was standard operating procedure for Jamaica. When I finished the survey, I said to Don, "I don't want you to take this house. These are the reasons why, but primarily this is a bad location given its proximity the gully." The gully provided after-dark travel paths for bad guys; they actually existed for water runoff. He took the house anyway.

*Q: So you didn't actually have a veto on these things. You just had a recommendation?*

WILLIAMS: Just a recommendation then. He took it, and within a month he held a welcoming party for himself and everybody else at his house. Terri and I were there. We went home about eleven. By 12:00 midnight a group of criminals had come out of the

gully, which is why I had told him not to take the house. They tied Don up. A Peace Corps woman volunteer in her 50s, who had been brought in from the field to stay there because she had been raped in the field, was raped again. Don's wife was raped. He was beaten. They tried to rape his 12 or 13 year old daughter. It was a mess. It was a horrible, horrible situation.

We moved him out of the house, and the DCM laid down the law instantly. We had a great DCM, Roy Haverkamp, who just recently passed away. He essentially put out a rule that said, "If you take a house that the RSO tells you not to, you will be paying for it yourself, because the U.S. government will not reimburse you for any expenses associated with that house." Well, as you can imagine, that stopped that. There were no more houses taken over my objections. There were many reasons not to take places, but location was often the biggest one, followed by the inherent insecurity of the houses. Unfortunately you did need grilles on your windows, and you did need something called a "rape gate." Have you ever heard of that?

*Q: It might be what we had in Nigeria, where the upper level of the house was barred off inside the house, even though the whole outside of the house that was already barred off.*

WILLIAMS: That's right. It separated the bedroom areas from the other parts of the house, and in Jamaica, because the houses tend to be one story, it was the hallway going down to the bedrooms. Right in the hallway was the rape gate, and you'd lock the rape gate at night. It was unbelievable.

But I did set up this program, we did get funding, we started drastically improving residential security and thereby reducing the numbers of incidents. We would retrofit where we didn't have grilles and solid core doors, and those were some fairly easy things. We required solid core doors or metal grilles, something on the exterior of all the doors. We required the hinges to be on the inside, and if the hinges were on the outside that the hinges be pinned. If you don't know what that means, it means you have some sort of device in the inside. When you close the door it goes in a little hole, and you can't take the door off by pulling off the hinges. That's what it's meant to prevent. We would settle for grilles, if they were substantial, either on the outside or the inside. They're better on the inside, because somebody has to break the glass to get to the grille.

I also had to make sure that they had an escape out of these places, that you wouldn't have these people grilled into their house and then the house on fire. Then we put up flood lights. We ensured there was good lighting. So, grilles, doors, good lighting, and then we put in residential security systems with inside and outside enunciators, which just made a hell of a racket when they went off. Then we gave everybody radios, so that if their telephone lines were cut they could call for help from the Marine Security Guard. The Marines would then call me and the police. We did a lot of things.

*Q: So this was a new initiative that had not been done systematically before?*

WILLIAMS: Nowhere. I ended up hiring two people, Mr. Brown and Mr. Taylor, whom I fondly remember to this day. Mr. Brown did all of my lock work. I should have added that we put in our own locks. We really added value to many of these houses. We put in all the locking devices to ensure they had good reliable locks, and Mr. Brown would also take care of any deficiencies with the hinges and those kinds of things. Then we put in deadbolt locks on tops of the doors so you couldn't throw your weight against a solid door and break it open. We would put deadbolts both high and low, so we were building pretty solid, good residential security systems with these things.

Mr. Taylor put in the alarm systems, and we would typically alarm the windows. We had break glass sensors on some windows. Doors were alarmed, plus panic alarms, and that's very important. Wireless panic alarms. We cut down residential crime and personal injuries.

Then, knowing the Department, you can imagine what happened next.

This all took place, I think my first couple years there. We started reducing the crime at our residences, and then the effectiveness paradox kicked in. Do you know what the State Department's effective paradox is? Mind you, I have made this up.

*Q: Go ahead.*

WILLIAMS: If you solve a problem, we'll take your money away, because there is no longer a problem. And that's exactly what they did! They said, "Well! Wait a minute! Your crime's way down. You don't need all these programs," and you sit there and shake your head, and you look at them and say, "Have you lost your mind? Why do you think crime is down?" Never dawns on them. Never dawns on them. But the funding was then reinstated, and the money kept flowing at least while I was there.

I knew in my heart of hearts, that people should move into apartments. It was political, as you can imagine, a very sensitive issue. Families did not want to move into apartments, and I understood that, but I knew that if we really wanted to make people safe, if we wanted to do it at a lot cheaper cost, then we had to move them into multi-story, high rise apartments. There were beautiful apartments in Kingston, so it could have been done. Ultimately I don't know what they did. I think they did start favoring apartments. If you were a single person, unless you had representational responsibilities, we would not allow you to have a single family dwelling. We would only allow families. That's just something else the DCM and I worked out.

There were a lot of things going on for a one-person RSO operation: the investigative programs, the problems we had with passport/visa fraud, and the drug problems, the counterfeiting issues, and the personal and residential security challenges. Jamaica just has all sorts of criminal enterprises. It was never dull. But there are some stories from Jamaica that deserve to be told.

*Q: Let's hear them.*

WILLIAMS: The consular section called me one day, and said, "Denny, we've got this guy here. He swears he's an American, but you know, we just don't think he is. Can we send him over to talk to you?" "Sure." So they sent him over, he sits down, clearly has a Jamaican accent. I said, "Tell me about yourself." Well, you know, he went to the United States seven years ago. He now owns three or four houses in the U.S., so he's in kind of the real estate business. He and his girlfriend flew down from the United States to just vacation in Jamaica," and blah, blah, blah.

I said, "Okay, pull out your wallet. Lay out everything from your wallet. Take everything out of your wallet. Put it on my desk," and he did. Everything from a health card to a library card to a voter registration card, so I made some phone calls. I called the DS/SY Command Center, and I said, "I'd like you to run these things for me...run them down." Within a half an hour or so, they had run them down. They were all valid. I thought, "Hmmm. Okay, this is interesting." I said, "Tell me again, when did you go up to the United States?" "Seven years ago." I said, "Where did you live?" He told me again. I said, "And in what court were you naturalized?" Blank face. He said, "What you mean, mon?" ...Blank face. I said, "You never received naturalization. You are not an American citizen." He said, "Yes, mon I stayed there five years. I become an American citizen after five years." I said, "No, that's not the way it works." He was a very decent guy. He was a very decent guy. He did not realize that he was not an American citizen *de facto*, if not *de jure* after five years. He thought citizenship automatically conveyed if you can just make it to the fifth year. Of course, everything he had was valid. He built one on top of the other on top of the other, got a driver's license and then he got a library card, then he went and got a social security card, and before you know it he had a whole wallet full of valid identification, albeit fraudulently obtained. Amazing story, isn't it?

*Q: Interesting, yeah.*

WILLIAMS: America...land of opportunity.

*Q: American relations with Jamaica at this time, was that the Michael Manley time?*

WILLIAMS: It was the Michael Manley time, and if you wish to see one of his mother's original works of art, it's hanging up here in our home. Norma Manley was a famous artist. But I want to end the story. The end of the story is, his girlfriend flew back down. She had left the country. Air Jamaica would not put them on the plane, because if they took him up there and U.S. immigration turned him down, they'd have to pay for bringing him back to Jamaica, so they wouldn't let him get on the plane. His girlfriend would fly down several days later, and they would get married, and he would then become eligible to go back to the U.S., so it did have a nice ending. And as I said earlier, he was a very nice guy.

Relationships were a little rocky back then because Manley was a bit too left-leaning for the U.S. There were a lot of leftist dealings going on back there. Jamaica was importing arms from Cuba, and there were reportedly Cuban advisors somewhere in the country. There was a whole lot of talk about money coming in from Cuba to support the JLP, the

Jamaica Labor Party. There was the JLP and the PNP, the People's Nationalist Party. One was considerably more leftist than the other. The JLP, Michael Manley's party, was considerably more left leaning. There were too many things going on underneath the surface, and much of it had to do with Cuba. The PNP, the opposition, was forever screaming that JLP and Manley were getting in bed with the Cubans and the communists and everything else, so there was some tenseness in our relationships. They weren't hostile, but they were tense.

*Q: Did this lead to any anti-American demonstrations or any other kind of anti-American activities?*

WILLIAMS: No. I don't recall any anti-American demonstrations in Jamaica at all. I did, however, have a little problem because of Manley being who he was.

Michael Manley had a bodyguard, Windsor Stuart. I'd seen Windsor around because I'd been in functions where the prime minister had been there, and I knew of him. To make a long story short, one day Windsor Stuart showed up in my office and said, "I don't want to be a policeman anymore. I don't want to protect the prime minister. Do you have a job for me?" I didn't have a Foreign Service National investigator. I knew I needed one, and I think I may have even gotten approval to hire one, and here was this guy standing in front of me, a sergeant on the police force with 10 or more years of service. I thought, "Crap! I could use someone like him."

I went to the station chief, CIA station chief. We sat down and I gave him his name and the other particulars, and he came back to me and said, "Not of record with us. As far as we know, he's just a police officer as he says." So I hired him. As it would turn out the station chief went TDY back up to Washington or something, and the deputy was there.

At the first country team meeting after I'd hired Windsor, got him an office and started training him, the deputy station chief basically said, "Well, Denny just hired a communist and put him among our ranks." Now you can imagine my reaction to that! "Poor, very, very poor." I said, "You better produce evidence or you better have another avenue to approach this," and the country team meeting broke up on that wonderful note of this guy saying and me saying, "You better put up or shut up." They couldn't put up, and the station chief would come back and apologize to the entire country team for what had been the foolishness of his deputy. The guy was a little bit uncontrollable. But that was my only scare.

Windsor would turn out to be a long term employee. He is still there today. I had lunch with him about four months ago. He has a picture hanging on his wall of him and of me, and we have been good friends, of course, ever since. We became an inseparable team member as we tried to deal with the multitude of issues in Jamaica. We, of course, got a weapons permit for Windsor. We formed a working team consisting of the Detachment Commander, Windsor Stuart, the DEA agent, consular officer Steve Mann, and me. A bit *ad hoc*, but it worked. We had no high level visits while I was there, as you could imagine. Nobody really came to Jamaica.

*Q: Why? I would have thought you'd have all kinds of congressmen and so forth who wanted to spend time in Jamaica.*

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: Well, if they did, they went up to the north coast with their mistresses or whomever. We didn't know anything about it. In fact, the day-to-day activity was extremely busy. I sat at my desk one day, on the sixth floor of the Mutual Life Insurance Building -- that's where the embassy was at the time. Parenthetically, the embassy now has its own fortified compound. The Mutual Life Insurance Building, which we occupied part of, was a building in downtown Kingston.

I can remember sitting there one day with the radio on in the background working on something, not looking out the window, not paying any attention to anything. In my subconscious I'm noting that there seemed to be all kinds of traffic problems around the city. There's this congestion and that problem there, and I'm vaguely aware of issues around town, but just barely. Finally, a Foreign Service colleague comes into my office and says, "Denny, do you know they're rioting in the streets all over Jamaica?" Come out of the fog, not even the fog of war. "What???" I finally turned around and looked out my window down at the streets, and crap! There are tires burning in the streets. There's all kind of things going on. Holy crap! How did I miss all of this?

*Q: It's good to know the RSO is right on top of it.*

WILLIAMS: Right! Certainly on top of the situation...not! So yeah, I strapped on my weapon, and got a radio. The big problem here was the embassy parking lot was right behind the Mutual Life building. We had some people out and about, and I knew it. I had just sent a SEO back to his hotel in a car, and I thought, "Crap. That was not a good idea," so I got on the radio and told him to return to the embassy as best he could.

I went down to the embassy parking lot, and there was abject confusion. There were people running around, people burning tires, demonstrators in the streets, and there was an embassy car sitting halfway into our parking lot, halfway back out to the street, and the driver standing off to the side and said, "What are you doing?" I said, "Get in the car and move the car in here." "Mmmmm." I said, "What do you mean 'no'?" I said get in that car and move it in here." He was afraid to, because the Jamaicans were wielding two-by-fours.

He finally walked over to the car and got in the car. As soon as he did that, truly, a Jamaican came flying across at me, pulled back a two-by-four out to hit me, and I pulled out my gun, and I said, "I will kill you right now." He said, "No, mon," and he dropped the two-by-four. That was not the first time I had drawn my gun in Jamaica, but it was time I thought I might actually have to shoot him. If he had decided to swing the two-by-four, I would have shot him.

This kind of stuff happened all the time. As it turned out we did get the car in, I did get the security engineering officer back to the embassy. They were rioting in the streets. They weren't aiming anything at us. It was over the price of bread. After a day or two of this, everybody's sheltered essentially in place, it petered out, they cleared the streets, and everything went back to normal. Jamaica could be extremely volatile.

We had a public affairs officer, she was of Asian descent and an attractive lady, and she had two incredibly beautiful daughters who were about 16 and 17. Yes, that sounds about right. The three of them together attracted Jamaican men like flies, and sure enough one night at 3:00 in the morning, I get a phone call from a Marine Security Guard. The women had barricaded themselves in their safe haven room in their home, and there are a group of Jamaican men trying to break into the house. At 3:00 in the morning I pick up my .357 revolver, radio and get a flashlight and jump in my car—I've got a government car—and take off for the residence. The good news is that because I've surveyed everybody's residence, I know where most everybody lives, and three or four blocks out, I turned on the siren system in the car hoping that I'll scare them off. The Jamaican police had maybe half a dozen police cars for the entire city of Kingston, and we're talking about a city back then with a population of 600-700,000. It was virtually impossible to get police to respond for you, simply because they were so under-resourced. So, you know I have to do it, and you do. I got there, it's dark as hell, so got out my car with a flashlight and a gun, and I hope they're gone. I really don't want to meet a group of Jamaicans in the dark in the middle of the night. They were gone, as it turned out, and I'd get women out of the house, took them back to our house. I told them the next day, "You're moving. You're not living there anymore. You're going to an apartment building or someplace else. You're not staying there." Of course the DCM backed me up on everything, and they moved.

But I can't tell you how many times we had consular officers threatened. They'd be killed...

*Q: If they didn't give a visa?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, exactly! I mean, we had to escort a consular officer to and from work for like two weeks. I had a guy make an appointment to see me, a Jamaican. I had no idea why, and I just let it go through. I said, "All right, I'll see him." He shows up in my office and says, "Ah, Mr. Williams. I need a visa." I said, "I don't do visas." He said, "No, no. I need a visa." I said, "I don't do visas." We went back and forth for like two minutes. Finally I said, "We're done here. Get up and leave." He said, "No, Mr. Williams. You better give me a visa. You better watch your back." I said, "If you miss, I'll kill you. If you miss I'll kill you. I promise you." I'm thinking, "God, what is going on here?" "You've got to watch your back, mon. You could be dead." Never saw him again, you know, but that's the kind of crap that was going on all the time. It was a little different with me, because I literally carried a gun 24 hours a day, but what about the consular officer that they follow home? You worry about all those people. Jamaica was very dangerous place.

By now I've established local guards. I've got local guard posts, I've got metal detectors in place, we're searching everybody coming into embassy offices, and everybody in chancery offices.

*Q: This was not being done before?*

WILLIAMS: Not before I got there. We're searching everybody going into the consular section. We have a big box there that says, "Throw your guns and your knives in here or get out of line, and no, you don't get them back." That box was full of knives! We didn't get many guns. I don't know that we got any guns, but we had all kinds of knives and stuff in there. I think people said, "I'm getting out of line if I have to throw my gun in," but it was unreal. Knives they seemed to gladly part with in order to stay in line. This was the visa line.

I remember DCM Roy Haverkamp calling me one time and saying, "We have this high level visitor coming, a senior Jamaican government guy," and he said, "Denny, please don't search him." I said, "Roy, this is a mistake. We shouldn't be doing this." He wasn't a minister, but he was somebody senior in the Jamaican government. He said, "Denny, please." I said, "Okay, Roy." He said, "Oh, by the way, join us in my office for this meeting in my office." Sure as hell, the guy crossed his legs, and what do you think was on his ankle? An ankle holster and a gun! Roy saw it, he looked at me, and he kind of went sheepish, and shook his head thinking, "Shit. You were right." As I said, Roy was a great guy and we worked well together.

We would check guns at the embassy. If police came or senior visitors came we would check their guns, like a coat check. It's unreal. Think about this. "Here's your check. You may pick your gun up on the way out." We would check guns, because we had too many police visitors or others who legitimately were carrying guns, and obviously I wasn't going to treat them like somebody on the consular line over there.

*Q: Do you have any more Jamaica stories for us, or should we start moving on?*

WILLIAMS: A couple of anecdotal things. I had one of those phone calls I got one other day from the USAID offices. I think they were AID offices. They were located below us in the building. They were down on the third or second floor. I remember they said, "We've got this problem with this man in our offices," and I went down there. Here sat the biggest Jamaican I had ever seen in my life, and he had absolutely glossy eyes. He was so stoned. He had no idea where he was. He was seven foot something. Ultimately, I talked him out of the building mostly by convincing him there was no one there he could get dope from. I don't even know what I said to him. I just remember thinking I've never seen a Jamaican this big! Absolutely stoned. Had no clue what he was doing, where he was at. Thank God he did not turn violent. This happened all the time in Jamaica.

Then another one of those anecdotal stories...we had a guy visit the U.S. consular section. He was an American and an absolutely obnoxious jerk. Occasionally you would get some of these. He ended up over at the embassy screaming and yelling, and I wasn't there in

the chancery. He was in the in the lobby where the Marine Post 1 was. He'd kind of harassed the entire embassy, but mostly the consular section for about a week.

Then he showed up back at the chancery. He was sitting outside with a Jamaican, contemplating, I think, the next trouble they were going to cause. I walked up to him and I said, "It's about time to leave this country unless you want to end up in jail." His Jamaican buddy started piping up, and I think I recall saying something like, "I don't think I was talking to you, and if you were really smart you would get out of here now." This guy came back up to the chancery. I could not believe it after just having had this little run-in when I basically told him, "If you don't leave, I will go to my police friends, and I will ensure that you end up in jail here, and you don't want to go to jail in Jamaica," or something like that. "You'll get thrown on a plane and kicked out by the Jamaicans." That's what I was telling him.

In any event, he came back upstairs and started screaming and yelling in the embassy lobby. The Marines called me and I went back downstairs to the lobby. This is probably the first time I lost it overseas a little bit, physically. He sat back down and he said, "If you want to make me move, make me move." And that's all it took. I yanked him out of his chair, ripped his shirt off of him, and popped all the buttons on the front of his shirt. The Marines were out there, and they were drooling, ready to do something like beat him with batons or something. He never came back. I don't know whether it was the ripping of his shirt, but he never came back, and yet these crazies have a way. That gave me a whole new appreciation for the consular officers who had to deal with American Citizen Services, because these crazies are out there. This guy would never show up again, so I presume he got on a plane and went home.

We did have a problem with somebody threatening a consular officer. I told you a little bit earlier in addition to escorting officer, I went to the police, my police contact, to the deputy commissioner. To this day I remember him saying to me, "Denny, you want us to just make him disappear?"

*Q: Oh, God!*

WILLIAMS: I said, "No! No! I don't want you to just make him disappear! First I'd like you to talk to him and tell him that he's harassing a U.S. diplomat, and if he doesn't stop then yes, I'd like you to arrest him. Make him disappear? No." Just amazing what a bottle of scotch a year and an occasional lunch can do for you.

This is kind of a wild west world that we lived in there. You asked earlier if I could do investigations on the economy and I said "no." But in reality, the Jamaicans did not really care what I did. Legally, probably not, but nobody cared. We could do just about anything we wanted there. Most Jamaicans and certainly the Jamaican constabulary force were very pro-American. It was not unusual to have the police at a parties or go to one of their parties, and they party...Jamaicans do party! I remember the police superintendent whose last name was Williams, got drunk as a skunk and kept telling me that he wanted to work for the CIA! I guess he assumed I was CIA. We had pretty strict orders to not

deny that we were CIA or even acknowledge that we had CIA at post, but I felt compelled this one time to take this guy to a corner and say, "I'm not the CIA, you cannot work for me and please leave me alone!"

Unfortunately that happened all too often. People volunteer to be your spies and all kinds of stuff. Of course, I turned his name over to the CIA station.

*Q: So who knows? Maybe he is.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, who knows?

*Q: And living conditions for a family there?*

WILLIAMS: Living conditions. Sure enough Terri would arrive in September. We all moved into this little house we had in Cherry Gardens or wherever it was, and we had a little swimming pool out in front of our house. I was not home, I was at work. Terri was out there with the kids swimming, and she had taken off her watch and playing in the pool and went inside for something only to come out and find a man had climbed over the wall and had stolen her watch. Remember when I said everybody who lives in a house will have two criminal events? That was our first criminal event.

*Q: It sounds fairly lucky compared to some of your other criminal events you have described.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely...absolutely. We were lucky. We actually would move. In less than a year we had moved to a house on Four Mark Way. I still remember that. The house at Four Mark Way sat on an acre of land...a beautiful house. It was kind of a rambling in design. It had a large swimming pool out in back and large grounds, tropical trees and foliage. It was a beautiful place. We did have domestic help by this time. An inside house person and outside person to take care of the grounds and the yards. We also had two dogs that roamed the yard at night, because criminals were everywhere trying to break into these houses. It was the dogs that kept you safe.

It was a real problem to go out running in Jamaica, as you can imagine, in the daytime with that shoulder holster flopping against your arm pit. Just kidding about that! But just running, the dogs would chase you. Most of the dogs wouldn't go far away from their yards or their houses, but you could never be sure what they were going to do. Many were really vicious and unpredictable. Everybody had some sort of big dog or dogs, and we did, too. I didn't know you could train a black Labrador to be so mean. The dog came with the house and the black Lab was "Suka," not our name but the one given to him by the owner of the house. Suka lived literally in a caged dog house, and I would release him late in the afternoon or early evening and he and a smaller companion dog, which was not caged, would roam the grounds at night.

*Q: Oh, my.*

WILLIAMS: Suka – the name even sounded ominous--Suka would bite anybody. Suka was big and amazingly smart, but an absolutely ferocious guard dog. Occasionally, as Suka got use to us and we to him, I would let him out of the cage during the day. You were never entirely sure that Suka would not turn on you, but he never did, he never bit any of us or any of the kids. However, our cat Kitty would harass the hell out of Suka. One day Suka picked up Kitty in his mouth and flung her around in a circle and put her down. He could have easily killed our cat but chose not to. Kitty never harassed Suka again.

We traveled all over Jamaica by car. The north coast was especially enchanting. James Bond Beach is up in the north coast. It's in Ocho Rios. Ocho Rios or Eight Rivers. On the north coast is Dunn's Rivers Falls. Dunn's River Falls is one of the most beautiful falls in the entire world and you could walk up it. We got out to Montego Bay. The Gold Coast is the north coast, and most of the resorts are on the north coast and towards the west coast. Most of the resorts are self-protected enclaves that, sadly, you go in and just don't come out of until you are ready to leave for the Montego Bay airport.

But it was still nice enough to go to all of those places. We stayed in a Sheraton on the north coast that really operated on its own separate from the all-inclusive resorts. There are just beautiful places to play. I learned how to scuba dive in Jamaica, and it was pretty serious scuba diving. It was doing hundred foot diving. I took lessons and learned to dive there, got certified there, did many dives there, and then would stop, when I came back to the U.S. for a domestic assignment.

It was good living as long as you lived within the constraints of the safety and security factors. The kids flourished. Jeff and Chris went to a Jewish school, which was the best international school in the city, and they loved, as you can imagine, the water, the ocean, the beach, the swimming pools. Like all Foreign Service communities in the third world countries where there are problems like those in Jamaica, it was a pretty nice close knit embassy community. There were lots of parties. There were lots of social gatherings. There was a lot of interaction with Jamaicans. Jamaicans were very much a part of our social scene. There were a lot of good people in Jamaica, and a lot of good times.

*Q: And it was a three year assignment this time.*

WILLIAMS: It was a three year assignment.

*Q: Was it a three year assignment from the start or were you extended?*

WILLIAMS: No, a two year base assignment, and I requested a third year extension.

*Q: You liked it enough to stay an extra year.*

WILLIAMS: I extended an extra year and, yes, we did like it. By then the ambassador was Lorie Lawrence, and the whole dynamic of the country team and the attitudes in the embassy had changed. Lorie was a great guy. He was a good ambassador and was very

supportive of the embassy staff. Roy Haverkamp was the DCM, and he became my model for what a DCM should be. It was just an overall good working relationship. I was part of the country team and became a major player with all mission sections. It was professionally and personally rewarding, a great assignment.

*Q: So it was time to bid again.*

WILLIAMS: It was.

*Q: I think we've finished up Jamaica.*

WILLIAMS: Almost. I forgot to mention one other thing, then we will be finished. By the second year that we were there Terri would become very much involved with the community. She would take over as the commissary manager. That really makes me remember two or three other things, but Terri did an outstanding job. She took the commissary, which was a little hole in the wall and really built it into something that was quite respectable for the American community, because the American embassy community was growing. I think I said it would go to at least a hundred American employees, and maybe over a hundred by the time I left, plus families. The commissary became an important lifeline, even more so than usual in most countries, because Jamaica has such a severe economic crisis. The U.S. was not supporting it, because of PM Michael Manley's policies and his government's policies, so we were not pouring in aid as we had previously.

As a consequence, they couldn't get their police cars fixed because they had no parts. They couldn't buy parts. There was not food on the shelves. The grocery stores, the supermarkets, were pitiful to say the least. Jamaicans, like so many people in so many places who had the wherewithal didn't have food problems. They had their own sources of supply; they'd fly them in from Miami. You had to behold flights in from Miami coming in on Air Jamaica and how much stuff would fit on one airplane. It was just amazing. I was forever flying because I also covered the Bahamas and the Cayman Islands, so I was actually regional. That's pretty rare anymore. So I'd go over to the Bahamas every two or three months mostly to escape Jamaica! The Bahamas, in comparison, did not have any significant problems, but that too would change in time.

*Q: Let me ask you a little more about that because you hadn't mentioned the regional aspect of this before. Did we have embassies or representation in the Bahamas and Cayman Islands?*

WILLIAMS: We did. We had an embassy in Nassau, the Bahamas, because it was an independent country, but the Cayman Islands was still a ward of the United Kingdom. I believe it's still part of the British Commonwealth. So we didn't have any official presence, as I recall. I was just doing occasional liaison visits with the police. When I went over to the Caymans for a liaison visit, I was assigned a police car and driver. Interestingly, they did not want me wandering around on my own. I think they

believed I was there under false pretenses, and not really who said I was. It was a bit strange, but nevertheless an interesting place to visit.

I went to the Caymans with Terri. This had to be sometime in 1981, I would guess. I was in Caymans when President Reagan was shot. I had gone diving in the Caymans with this absolute dope-head, literally a druggie dooper. He had been assigned as my partner by the dive master, not by my selection. I can remember getting out of the water and drying off and having him stumbling up to me. How he made that dive I'll never know, since he was absolutely spaced. "Hey, man, you hear they shot that friggin' Reagan?" Well, he was right as it turned out, and that's how I got the news about the assassination attempt on President Reagan.

I only made a couple of liaison visits to Cayman. There was nothing we were doing in Caymans. They had very little reason to follow me around and be concerned. I was over there on a counterfeit investigation, but I worked it directly with the police. I was not trying to work independently over there. I didn't know the Caymans well enough to work independently.

The Bahamas were different, a more normal relationship. The admin officer was the PSO, Post Security Officer. The problem with the Bahamas was it was too big for me to handle as a Regional Security Officer. It needed its own RSO there, and they would get it shortly after I left, simply because it just was getting too big. There were lots of issues in the Bahamas, a lot of bilateral issues working with the Bahamian government. Drugs...it's all drugs and similar things in the Caribbean. Passport and visa fraud issues were there, too, but I had no time to do that and to do what was going on in Jamaica. I'd go over, inspect houses, do what I could do in a week. I would process violations, do some liaison with the police, work with the Marine Security Detachment, etc.

*Q: This was about every couple of months you'd go over?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, every two or three months I stayed at a nearby, nice hotel – I think it's a Sheraton now – literally about a block from the embassy. Bahamas is a great place to play. I went diving with the MSG detachment commander on a couple of occasions. On one occasion, I damn near died in six feet of water. Got caught in undertow current and had to pull myself out of the current with my dive knife. I'm not kidding. I was in six feet of water. The current was so strong it was going to pull me over a coral wall out into the sea, so you literally inch your way forward, as flat on the bottom as you can get, with your dive knife out in front. You pull yourself along with your other hand and dive knife -- strange how things can happen.

The Bahamas had a lot more things going on, but I just didn't have sufficient time to really help as much as I should have.

*Q: Was that an issue of tension at all, you being the RSO? Was the ambassador or whomever ever unhappy that you were not there as often as you should be?*

WILLIAMS: No. The ambassador was a political appointee from Georgia by Jimmy Carter. He was there most of the time. He wasn't a bad guy. He didn't do a thing, so he didn't really care much about anything. All he did was go to representational parties by the government and play golf. He loaned out his armored vehicle one time, as I recall, to his son! I had to go talk to him about loaning out U.S. government armored vehicles. I had to tell him he really couldn't do that.

*Q: At that time we had armored vehicles even for ambassadors in the Bahamas?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, we did. We were putting armored cars around the world for Ambassadors. There were different levels of armoring.

*Q: Interesting.*

WILLIAMS: I think it may have been lightly armored. I don't think it was fully armored. Now we have fully armored for all ambassadors everywhere. For the most part, the Ambassador was a nonentity. If he showed up for a couple of hours in the embassy every day, that would have been a long work day. He'd show up at ten, dictate his personal letters to his secretary in the office. Then he's go play golf in the afternoon. It was truly obscene. It truly was. Not an evil person at all, just an insult to any sort of work ethic, and an insult to U.S. taxpayer

*Q: I'm glad that doesn't happen anymore...*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right!

In any event, the other thing in Jamaica just to touch on, and then we probably can move on, is residential and personal crime, and there was a lot. We rather effectively countered those threats through taking physical security steps and procedural steps, and thoroughly, *thoroughly* briefing both employees and dependents on personal security, and on how to not to get themselves in trouble. So we were able to better control crime affecting the embassy community. Though I never got another DS agent, I did get a Foreign Service national investigator, had good secretaries. And I had great Detachment Commanders, thank God. We had cooperation with the DEA guy who was there and with our consular fraud officer Steve Mann, so it was a pretty good working team. There was just too much for all of us to do...way too much. Today, I believe, there are three DS agents in Jamaica and three in the Bahamas. And I was an army of one.

*Q: Typical Foreign Service story.*

WILLIAMS: The military assigns four people, we assign one.

*Q: Let me ask you about one more issue that I know has got to be one of your favorite issues as a security officer: pink slips. You mentioned them in passing at one point. These are security violations. Were those just a routine pain in the neck or was there any serious problem with them?*

WILLIAMS: I adopted a very simple policy very early on because I was the guy who even handled violations in Tokyo. The senior RSO, Pete Roche initially, and eventually Pete would be replaced by Lance Putney who was a much more agreeable personality, a much more likeable person. Pete was one of the intellectually smartest people I've ever met in my life, but he could be painfully disagreeable to people, so I handled all the violation program. The policy I set in Tokyo and I never changed ever again was, "If you got a violation that's valid, you've got a violation. If the Marines catch Denny in violation, they get a bottle of wine. If it's valid, I take it. That's the way it is." That way I never ever had anybody say to me, "Yes, but you cancelled Peter's violation." No, I didn't. Occasionally, Marines issue violations that are mistaken, e.g., it really was not a classified document. Those I would cancel. Valid violations were never cancelled. I gave the DCM in Cairo, whom you knew, about 10 violations. He was suspended for several days.

**[End Tape 2, side B]**

*Q: It's still August 12, 2007. We're beginning tape 3 with Dennis Williams being interviewed by Peter Eicher. We were just about to wrap up Jamaica, and had talked a little bit about security violations in general as one of the things RSOs have to deal with. Was there anything else you want to say in regard to Jamaica?*

WILLIAMS: You learn early on as I learned in Tokyo, that violations could be one of the most emotional things that reached out and touched people. A violation is typically classified information that's improperly stored, you forgot to put it away or whatever, and Marine Security Guards find it as they go around and do their inspections at night. Some people react fairly stoically and accept it, and other people go into an emotional meltdown. Just depends on the individual.

I did, in fact, equitably adjudicate to ensure that there was a true violation and it wasn't just a mistake. I would cancel those that were clearly mistakes, but I had to write something up then as to why I cancelled it. That's fine. I didn't want to see people getting violations for something that had been mismarked or had been confidential and had been downgraded or whatever. You can't allow that to go forward, and I didn't. Otherwise, the violations stood.

I have a side story, too. I had been sent from Tokyo over to Taipei to fill in for the RSO for Taipei, and I was appalled to find that the RSO had 120-some unprocessed violations that he left for me to handle. Now, I just cancelled them all. There's no way I can adjudicate these, not a year away from when it was issued, whenever it was. Marines were beside themselves that none of these things had ever been processed, and they wrote them and wrote them and wrote violations and nothing was ever done. I did process maybe the most recent 10 or 20 violations if the people were still there and I could talk to them. This just astounded them, and it was as if I hit them with a club. Nevertheless, I processed them and sent them in. I walked away from that thinking I will never allow this

kind of situation to ever happen. I just will not allow it, and I never did. I was very fair with violations, but they are a pain in the ass. They're a huge pain in the ass.

Jamaica was no exception as well. If you got a violation, you got a violation. Marines caught me in Jamaica, and I think one or two times I left something on my desk in the rush at the end of the day or you're tired. You know as well as I do that this stuff happens.

*Q: Catching yourself is not necessarily a big problem, but catching the ambassador could cause you a little problem.*

WILLIAMS: Whoever got the violation got the violation. I made no exceptions. He can rip it up in front of me. I don't really care. I sent it in. I made no exceptions, and no one ever said, "You didn't send in the ambassador's violation." Wow, you know what ambassadors would do if they were thoroughly unethical – they would force their secretary to take it. I would allow that in some circumstances, and in other circumstances I wouldn't allow it, someplace where I thought the person was just being abused, truly, truly abused and was powerless. Basically what I'd say to the secretary is, "If you're stupid enough to allow this, you deserve it." I never saw ambassadors' secretaries who were powerless.

*Q: Not that I can recall! Usually the number two person in the embassy.*

WILLIAMS: Yes! That's right. So, there were some people that I thought were in a position to say, "No," and if they chose not to then maybe they did think they were responsible. Maybe the deal was, "I was supposed to check his desk after he was gone." In other situations I just wouldn't allow it. A very famous political counselor in Cairo, who shall remain nameless since you worked for him, tried to give other people violations, and I refused to allow that to happen. He also tried the trick that no one knows who is responsible. That happened all the time – no one would assume responsibility. As the chief of the section, I just issued the violations to him. He screamed, but too bad because the violations were upheld as valid.

The other kind of monumental thing that I need to mention for Jamaica and then we can move on is that risk caused by natural events called hurricanes. We had two major hurricanes come through Jamaica, Frederick and whatever the other one was called. This was my first experience with hurricanes. What I didn't realize was that in the absence of the embassy hurricane officer—there was no such position—the RSO becomes the embassy hurricane officer.

I gained a lifelong familiarity with how to call the National Hurricane Center in Miami and how to track the latitude and longitude of a hurricane coming across the ocean and into the Caribbean. I did develop a familiarity with hurricanes and I did in fact become the planning officer for all practical purposes. It forced us to do things I never thought we'd have to do. We ran a generator in an admin office inside the embassy and vented it out the window specially prepared by GSO, so the Marine Security Guards could keep

their radio systems up and running. We knew the entire island would lose power in a hurricane, and we knew that we had to maintain communications for the entire embassy community. All American staff had radios at home.

We established an every-hour-on-the-hour news brief from the Marine Security Guards to the community, because we knew people couldn't leave the radios on. They'd have no way to charge the batteries. We stockpiled food in advance. We moved all the commissary's freezers and refrigerators up to the ambassador's residence, because he had an emergency generator. It was just amazing the things we did. We dispersed all of the embassy's fleet of cars to people, to individuals, so that they could be used if they had to retrieve individuals. I worked through that twice, and that gave me an incredible respect for hurricanes.

During one of the hurricanes we went through, we invited the embassy financial officer, whose family was out of town, to come stay with us during the night the hurricane actually hit. Gilcrest. I can't remember his first name. We called him Gil. The hurricane was so loud, and this is in a concrete block house with the roof rated at 120 miles per hour. The noise from a hurricane was so loud, so incredibly loud, that we could not hear a major tree in our yard fall just feet from the house. We never heard it. It was amazing. Scary and amazing, and we were out of power for days. No lights and no air conditioning. By the way, if you don't know it, if you have a swimming pool the hurricane takes the water right out of the pool.

*Q: Interesting, but if no one heard it how can you be sure the tree fell?*

WILLIAMS: One hand clapping in the forest, right? Nobody heard it, though. When we went out the next day it was kind of like, "What?" Fortunately, it fell parallel to the house. It could have just as easily fallen on the house, and it would have fallen on Jeff and Chris's bedroom. They were sleeping in bunk beds in the room. The tree was right next to their room, and it just happened to go another way.

*Q: It shows what a good job you did planning, to have the tree fall away from the house!*

WILLIAMS: That was kind of it. I think by then, between hurricanes and tropical storms, pulling guns on people, criminal investigations, residential security, personal security, drugs, police officers who want to kill people for you, and on and on – well, I was ready to leave. At the end of my tour I was pretty much tired of all this.

*Q: Sounds like a pretty interesting assignment!*

WILLIAMS: It was a fascinating assignment. Why would you want to give all that up after only two years?

**Department of State, Special Programs and Coordination office, SY**

*Q: So you're back to bid lists again.*

WILLIAMS: Back to bidding. I was going back to the U.S. I was told, “You have to come back.”

*Q: You were told by SY. It was still SY at that stage?*

WILLIAMS: It was still SY at that point. I had to come back and by the way, I should tell you that when I got to Japan I got a promotion. Do you remember the old RU system? I got the equivalent of an FS-3 in Tokyo, and then got another promotion in Jamaica to FS-2. So I have to bid FS-2 positions in Washington.

*Q: Certainly, I remember that it was there, but never having been part of it, I didn't follow it very closely.*

WILLIAMS: FSRU is Foreign Service Reserve Unlimited, which is something like saying, “Your leprosy isn't really as bad as you thought.”

*Q: That's right. The old grades were two numbers higher than the new grades, yes. So the old FSRU-4 was the equivalent of the new FS-2.*

WILLIAMS: Before I left... No, right after I got to Jamaica I was promoted to FSRU4, which would have been an FS-2. Okay. Then I got a handful of awards in Jamaica, a superior performance, whatever...it doesn't matter. Now I've got to bid out, and I'm bidding out as a two, an FS-2.

*Q: You can only bid Washington assignments.*

WILLIAMS: I could only bid Washington assignments.

*Q: Were you pleased with that? You'd already been overseas five years. Were you ready to go home?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, I was. I was ready for a little bit of a break. This was 1981. Truthfully, Peter, I don't even remember what I bid on. All I remember is where I ended up. I ended in a new group called Special Programs and Coordination, SPC, or something like that.

*Q: It's pretty normal not to remember your bids, I think.*

WILLIAMS: Whatever those Washington assignments were, I bid a half a dozen of them and I was thinking, “I could probably live with this, or I probably could live with that.” I ended up in SPC, a brand new organization that had been set up. When I got back I was heartened to find that SY had gotten to be pretty big, and all of a sudden there were a whole lot more people there in the organization, and there was some semblance of a functioning organization that was supporting the field. But I had had some previous indicators of this. When I asked for a car overseas in Jamaica, they sent me a car. They

sent me a fully tricked out Chevy police pack with sirens and lights and all of this kind of stuff, so I had some indication that things had changed from a much leaner organization with few resources.

I ended up in something called Special Programs and Coordination. It was a brand new upstart organization that was focusing on physical security and residential security.

*Q: Overseas.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, overseas. I think the logical connection was that I had done this residential security in Jamaica, that it was the first formal residential security anywhere, and it was deemed highly successful. I got there in early September or late August.

*Q: Of which year? '81?*

WILLIAMS: 1981, and I'd only been there a few weeks and low and behold, I was promoted again to FSRU3 or the equivalent of an FS-1. That rather surprised me, but I had done a very good job in Jamaica...a very good job. I wasn't destined to stay where I was, SPC, because the position I was in was an FS-2 position, so within just a couple months I would discuss a change with the Director of Protection. I'm going over to be the deputy in the Dignitary Protection Division, or DP as it was called. The logic here of the deputy position was not that it was an FS-1 position. It was an FS-2 position; however, the FS-1 chief would be leaving in four months, so I took it the deputy position with the promise of becoming the division chief.

*Q: Before we move on to that, is there anything else you want to say about the special programs and coordination office?*

WILLIAMS: I thought it was going to bore me to death. They actually put me under a security engineering officer, which I objected to, but really do not recall why. SPC was a good idea, as the time had come to set up some sort of organization that dealt with physical and technical security issues, but it was in its infancy. I had no argument at all with the concept. It was a very good concept. Some years later, I would come back as the director of that organization, later called Physical Security Programs, or PSP.

*Q: Now that this is established and starting to grow suggests a dynamic within SY and presumably within the State Department that security is becoming more of a concern, security is becoming a more important issue. Is this people opening their eyes, or is it just becoming a more dangerous world?*

WILLIAMS: That's a fair question. I think it's becoming a significantly more dangerous world, and I think the State Department is starting to wake up to the fact that maybe its embassies aren't that well protected. But perhaps even more importantly, our people need something more than a handshake and a front door key, and residential security and personal security are part of our responsibilities overseas.

By now it's dawned on me that the State Department really doesn't know how to leverage its law enforcement security arm. It really doesn't. Mother State knows it needs security people, but it has not remotely thought through the bigger picture. This would eventually facilitate the proliferation of all the other federal law enforcement agencies overseas. Later, with DS an integral part of State, State management, State will figure out that there are advantages in using DS as its capable, worldwide law enforcement arm.

Today the DS people that are overseas are involved in everything that goes on in an embassy. I guess I was always involved, and it was certainly true in Jamaica, but I think we figured out how to leverage DS even further, that diplomacy isn't just limited to political or econ reporting. Diplomacy encompasses a multitude of different facets including law enforcement and security. That was the part back in the late '70s, early '80s, that the State Department could not see, did not want to see it, refused to see it.

*Q: Had there been some seminal events that led to this change, some assassinations of ambassadors? There have been some, what was it, Dubs? In Sudan or somewhere?*

WILLIAMS: That was the assassination of the CIA chief, Mr. Dubs, in Athens. The first Beirut bombing would come in 1981 or 1982. Shortly after I got back, terrorists took out all the Marines in the Beirut barracks. That was 1983, I believe. These were some seminal events. We, the State Department, were beginning to wake up to the fact that there are people out there who were really not friends. Whatever growth was taking place in SY was still pretty incremental.

The biggest change that took place really started with those of us who came in late 1973 through about 1978. State SY required college degrees and mostly experienced people, but not always. Most of us came into SY with a military or police background. State SY was looking for better educated, more experience staff. That was a real change from who they had been hiring...a real change.

*Q: That could have changed the atmosphere within State, as well, when they started getting more skilled and better educated people. They'll get more respect as well, I suppose.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely right...absolutely right. One of the things I learned quickly by observing successful country team members is that when you're in a country team meeting, you always must have something to say. I learned that within few weeks in Kingston, just through observation of other country team members. Of course, usually the RSO always had something to inform the country team about. We had a lot better interpersonal political skills in getting along overseas.

Coming back to the U.S. was not difficult. I was ready after five years to come back, and I needed to reacquaint myself, to assimilate into what was a new organization from the one that I had left, so it was the right period to come back. As I said, I did not stay in Special Programs and Coordination, but would come back to the renamed version later in my career as the Director.

*Q: And SPC presumably, more than the dignitary protection you were in before, was mainstreamed within the bureaucracy where you could see how State functioned better?*

WILLIAMS: I may have confused you. I left SPC for the deputy chief position in Dignitary Protection, or DP. Was the question whether DP or SPC was more State mainstream?

*Q: Yes. Not DP. My guess is that SPC was more mainstream. Sounds like you'd be dealing more with the embassies and the desks and so forth than you would when you were out on protective details in your previous assignment.*

WILLIAMS: It's interesting that you'd say that, because I think it was just the reverse. SPC, because it was brand new and was a growing organization, and its focus was attempting to help the embassies do various upgrades, setting standards and policies for the embassies, had very little coordination with the desks, the regionals. In fact, zero coordination with the regionals. Setting up programs, like residential security, where we could establish a unified, standard approach. Actually, I was very excited about that.

*Q: Did you have guidelines that you would develop and say, "Okay, all embassies must now adhere to X, Y and Z, in their residential housing policies?"*

WILLIAMS: No, and that's why we were brought together, to establish those guidelines that did not exist, and processes and policies. We were trying to standardize a worldwide approach rather than every mission is its own fiefdom. I found that kind of exciting because I was probably the only one in the group that had good residential security experience and could put together a cohesive, pragmatic policy based on experience.

But then, we had a little bit of a problem. There's a little ambassador by the name of Bob Sayer. He hung around for a long time, too. Somehow he got involved in residential security and actually do not remember why. Do you remember that name?

*Q: I do not.*

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure what his role was. Frankly, it's just been too long. But, whatever it was, he became an absolute impediment to establishing a residential security program, because for whatever reason, he believed that individuals were responsible for their own residential and personal security overseas and it was not the State Department's job. It was the most unbelievable position. Clearly he had never been mugged in Kingston. Pretty much, everybody is on their own. How silly.

*Q: He was in the office you were in?*

WILLIAMS: He was not. He was like the secretary's coordinator for security or terrorism or whatever...one of these bizarre, no-staff positions where he just interfered. So, when DP opened up, I said, "I'm out of here." I couldn't do anything, because he had just

enough power within the building to block us moving ahead with establishing unified guidelines of how the Department was going to approach residential security. If you take that position, then it would mean, "You're responsible for your housing. Get your own furniture. As to security, scrub those floodlights yourself. Don't you know how to put a lock on the door?" That was kind of the position he was taking.

*Q: Sort of like you would have to do at your own home in the United States, so, therefore, you should also do it at your own home abroad.*

WILLIAMS: Surely...absolutely. He made it... I'm not sure if I ever had a confrontational discussion with him or not, but I suspect I must have. I knew him, but I think I just walked away from him thinking, "I can't move this mountain. He's an ambassador, and I'm not." So I went to DP, and in Dignitary Protection, we had contact with *all* the regionals.

### **Department of State, Deputy Director, Office of Protection**

*Q: As deputy director and director, which we'll hear more about, I would expect that. I was referring more to your earlier position, where by your description, you were out more with the dignitaries than dealing with the desks. But let me ask you: when you moved over to being deputy director of DP, was this something you were familiar with, because you worked in that office before? Was it the same office you went to?*

WILLIAMS: No, not really the same. Before, there was no real DP office. Everything was informal. DP was set up to bring structure to foreign dignitary protection. It was an office with about 12 to 15 staff. It coordinated and supervised all foreign dignitary protection. I worked a lot of protection in the mid-1970s, but it was fairly poorly managed by SY.

*Q: So this was not the same office that you were moving into then?*

WILLIAMS: The office unit did not exist.

*Q: It didn't exist then, so this was an office that had been created in the five years since you had been at State?*

WILLIAMS: What it was, was a purely organizational development. It was an OP activity. This organization, the Office of Protection and its three divisions had been formed while I was overseas in Japan and Jamaica.

*Q: The job of this office was to protect whom?*

WILLIAMS: Foreign dignitaries who are in the United States. DP is the foreign dignitary protection management superstructure. Agents would be seconded to DP for actually staffing of protective details. DS has always had, still has, the authority to protect any foreign dignitary. They're usually designated by the office of protocol. Either it must be

ordered by the President or designated by the office of protocol, because this is a foreign dignitary. Then we have the authority to protect them, so there was a great deal of coordination with the regionals. In fact, huge coordination with all the regional bureaus as you would expect, and IO, International Organizations, and then with the foreign embassies themselves on all these details. Typically we are moving into this. Do we want to do this, Peter, or not?

*Q: If it's a good place to stop, we could stop it.*

WILLIAMS: Let's stop at six o'clock.

*Q: A good place to stop is before you get into your personal experiences. Continue with the framework of the office and how it worked.*

WILLIAMS: Exactly. DP was part of an office. It was the office of protection. Protection had two divisions and would have a third division that I would help form later. The two divisions were, the secretary's detail, or SD, and the Diplomatic Dignitary Protection Division, or DP. DP's function was to organize, supervise, staff, and manage the protection of visiting foreign dignitaries. It would also handle any U.S. protective details if they originated here and went overseas. For example, the deputy secretary of state, the USAID director, any special envoys, and any congressional delegations that went overseas that absolutely had to have DS with them.

I'm going to use DS synonymously with SY here. It's easier to just stay with...

*Q: Which is fine, but when we get to the chronological point at which it becomes DS, please mention it.*

WILLIAMS: I'll tell you. Organizationally DP was responsible for everything, all foreign dignitaries, most U.S. dignitaries traveling overseas, other than the secretary of state, and any kind of anomalous little things that would pop up. For example author Salman Rushdie was protected by DS. He had no official status, as you know, but he had to be protected by somebody. I think the office of protocol gave him some sort of status, but do not recall what magic formula they used.

*Q: This would be designated by the office of protocol, or you would decide, or...*

WILLIAMS: I would decide we were going to protect him and then I'd call the office of protocol and tell them that we needed someone designated as an official guest, or something like that. DP would work like this with the office of protocol because they couldn't survive without us, and we needed them as well. Actually, it was a good mutually supportive working relationship. SY was this anomalous directorate, that still had only one deputy assistant secretary, or DAS, and multiple offices and operations. It was still part of the bureau of administration, but slowly but surely it had been moving away from the bureau of administration. Our DAS sat completely away from the bureau of administration, and we had little or no contact with the bureau of administration. I

would suspect the DAS went to some sort of weekly admin bureau meetings, but that's about it. SY was becoming autonomous, and it was becoming very obvious. Organizationally, DP was and still is a very active place, because DS does anywhere from 125 to 150 protective details a year, all of these handled by DP.

*Q: You certainly couldn't do this with the eight or ten people you had in the office.*

WILLIAMS: There was somewhere between 12 to 15 staff assigned to DP, but job was to manage protective details. I would typically not do protective details, but there were exceptions. I'll come back to this later and tell you how I assigned myself to Prince Charles, because I thought it would be fun. I would assign myself to do a protective detail if I thought it looked especially good or especially fun or especially challenging. The six AICs went first, and we had a rotational system organizationally. Typically when we do a hundred... oh, let's just pick a number, 130 details a year. Just do the math. Divide that by 50 weeks in the year, that's roughly two and a half details or two and two-thirds, almost three details a week. That can be pretty onerous to do that many, but a detail can be only two days. It can also be two weeks. The six agents-in-charge, or AICs, they were the front line. Typically I would not use my deputy, although he would go out periodically just to keep skill his sets refreshed. We had a handful of other people in the field offices that we knew were senior and were experienced, and we trusted them if we needed additional AICs.

*Q: Who would be AICs?*

WILLIAMS: Who would be AICs, that is, the Agents- in-Charge?

*Q: You had other agents who were not in charge who were not on the details? Were they reporting directly to you, or where were they drawn from?*

WILLIAMS: Field offices. I had the ability to call the field offices and task them, and I would do that. We would decide what size the detail would be. If it were really nothing important it might be six people. If it were an escort, two people. Escort meant there was no threat whatsoever on this person, we're just doing it as a favor, typically for the regional bureau. You know, the wife of the minister of foreign affairs comes into town from Sri Lanka. Who has a clue? Nobody. We might do something like that on an escort basis knowing full well that there's no threat, there's no risk. We're just acting as facilitators and to ensure there is no embarrassment.

The smallest protective detail was typically six people, and details would rapidly rise in size from that. Twelve to 14 was a moderate size detail. With Prince Charles, I had 35 agents, and that was too few. It wasn't enough.

We standardized this in written documentation, doing a matrix on the size of an escort or detail based on several factors, but position and threats being key determinants. Escorts would get this, then there were various sizes of protective details, etc. Having standards at least as a guide reduced the capriciousness of process, at least somewhat. We would

approach the size of a protective detail based, in part, on articulating the risk or the threat. Typically we used the term “threat” back then, and much of a detail’s size was based on the threat analysis. Risk is a much more all-encompassing review of the situation, but then we focused primarily on threats, external threats.

*Q: Were you getting constant telephone calls from the desks saying, “We have the Sri Lanka’s foreign minister’s wife coming in, and could you please...”?*

WILLIAMS: They all had my number! They had my number. Sometimes we just said no. It’s not that I begrudged them asking. I knew what they were doing, and I understood that. In some cases there was no question. If we got a phone call that the Israeli foreign minister was coming to town for a week, there was no question. That was a 14, 16, 18 agent protective detail. Nobody had to explain the risk to me for him. The same with the Iranian foreign minister, or the Syrian foreign minister. All of these people had enemies on one side or the other, especially if they’re up in New York. There’s always somebody who hates you in New York...always.

Most of these were pretty intuitive. We always got a threat assessment. We had a threat organization called Intelligence and Threat Analysis or ITA. We always requested a threat assessment.

*Q: Within DS this was a threat analysis organization?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. What we were looking for is, if this person has been attacked before, who are the enemies, and that kind of stuff, because we’d brief the details on what was in the threat assessments. We would share that. Then we’d be in coordination with the pertinent embassy.

*Q: Which, of course, would also be asking you to do things, I presume. I mean the American embassies overseas presumably were generating a lot of these requests.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, of course they were, but they were filtered through the regionals. They usually didn’t come to us directly. We wouldn’t accept stuff like that directly. Now, with that said, there would be informal phone calls from RSOs just giving us advance knowledge on a visit that they knew we would be involved with.

Occasionally, interestingly enough, the RSO would come back with whoever the dignitary was. If it were a person of some significance and they wanted to participate for their own reasons, their own political reasons, that’s fine. The RSO just became another agent that we could work with us on the detail. However, that did not happen often.

The other thing DP did and does, is handle all the major special events. This is a big deal. So organizationally, mind you, I told you we handled dignitaries that we accept for protection, we handle U.S. officials who are going overseas and need protective services. We handled any sort of anomalous things like the Salman Rushdies that really don’t fit in any category, but we know we’ve got to provide protection for that person, and special

events. Among special events we get, of course, the UN general assemblies every year in New York City.

*Q: We talked about that before in your first Foreign Service assignment. Did you get any kind of surge capacity in DP to be able to do that?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, we did actually. It's probably better to come back to that next time. Every kind of major event that takes place, whether it's a foreign minister's conference or protecting dignitaries at the Olympics, fell to DP. All major conferences and events, for example the Asian-Pacific Economic Conference, typically involved the State Department and of course Diplomatic Security. Planning for these major events started months in advance and was highly complex. If a conference were to involve the president or vice president or heads of government, chiefs of state, then we were also working closely with the Secret Service.

*Q: You were doing them overseas as well?*

WILLIAMS: If it were a conference involving U.S. dignitaries, then yes, we were deeply involved.

*Q: Americans?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. We'd set up our own operations over there and run it, but our bigger challenge was during the bigger events that took place here. If the G8 summit were held here today, DS would have a huge responsibility along with the Secret Service. Typically we'd do a joint command post operation then and run it together. Secret Service and DS cooperation was actually quite good. In 1984 at the Los Angeles Olympics, we set up our first-ever joint operations center, from which we could coordinate all the protective details, police support, management of incidents, and provide mutual support. For the first time ever, they "borrowed" agents from DS to assist with a head of state – in this case it was the King of Fiji – to help staff protection at the Los Angeles Olympic Stadium.

*Q: The Secret Service is willing to help in a joint operation with DS?*

WILLIAMS: They were after I became the DP chief, because there's a story here too. Relationships were horrible. I think I told you before about the castle in the Smithsonian and having the secret service agents saying, "That car can't come in," even though it was the deputy prime minister of Israel's armored limousine.

*Q: I think I missed that story!*

WILLIAMS: It took place back at the Smithsonian castle – the very old red brick building that sits on Independence Avenue. I was an advance agent for this deputy prime minister of Israel, whomever that was back then. I was the lead advance agent, the agent who goes to the site in advance and learns everything about it. This typically took several

hours, and in this case the president was going to be there as well. I actually was not part of this protective detail, and almost always worked as an AIC, but in this case they were short of people, so at the last minute I was asked to help out with the advance. Protective motorcade vehicles had to go outside the Smithsonian grounds and the protective perimeter, go all the way down Constitution and then come back through the protective perimeter at a designated location. A flow of vehicles had been set up, and that was just fine. That worked fine.

I was down in the Secret Service command post. I got a radio call from the agent in our armored limousine, the limo for the deputy prime minister of Israel. The deputy prime minister had been dropped off and we had gotten safely inside to the secure dinner area. So I was back down in the Secret Service command post. I said, "Scott, what's the problem?" He said, "They won't let my car in." I said, "What? Show him your credentials." He couldn't get friggin' back through the Secret Service controlled perimeter! It's the deputy prime minister's car and our follow cars! If he has a headache in two more minutes he's going to want to go back to the hotel. That car's got to be here.

He called back five minutes later and said, "They won't let us in." I remember for some reason I had a Chrysler that night, and how much I hated those Chryslers we kept buying. Nevertheless, I jumped in the car, threw the red light up on top of the car and took off. I went down to Constitution, came around, went all the way around just like anybody else, pulled up to the perimeter road block. I got out, walked up to the road block and said "What is going on? I need these cars up at the Castle now."

There was a lone Secret Service agent who said, "They're not coming in." This is the part you'll remember. Two park policemen start walking away, they want no part of this. I, of course, said, "What do you mean they're not coming in?" The Secret Service agent replied said, "They have the wrong event sticker on their windshield." I was articulate in my response, "I don't give a shit what sticker is on the cars, those cars are coming in." Park police are gone. They're out of here. They said, "This is not good. This isn't going well." They're walking away. They go off and have a cigarette someplace in the woods.

I looked at this guy in utter disbelief and said, "You need to call your command post." I said, "You need to call your command post, because your command post is trying to call you. These cars are coming in, and they're coming in now." I went over and kicked the barricade down and knocked it out of the way. I said, "You've got two choices: either shoot the shoot the friggin' cars or get out of the way, because they're coming in." I just said, "Take them in, Scott. Get them in and up to the Castle." They got out of the way, and they drove the cars in. Crisis averted, this time.

Those were the kind of problems we were having everywhere with Secret Service, and those were the kind of problems that I would try to resolve in my time in DP and did.

*Q: So... a joint command post.*

WILLIAMS: By 1984, for the 1984 Olympics, we established a joint command post, but there's a precursor step.

*Q: We digressed a little bit into relations with the Secret Service, but I'm sure that was something you had to deal with a lot through your career.*

WILLIAMS: We did. Relations with the Secret Service had been rocky for some time. The problem was the Secret Service, as an institution, remembered why it had been given heads of government and chiefs of state protection, and that was because the old SY was really not very competent. Under-staffed, under-trained, and under-resourced. Back in 1971, then-SY totally lacked the resources and the ability to protect a chief of state like the president of France. It was truly pathetic – then SY “borrowed” Chicago firemen to drive the limos. Terrible and completely unprofessional. There was no training and no cadre of college graduate agents with prior experience. As you may recall, President Nixon had to deal with the president of France being spat upon by someone in the crowd. This was hugely embarrassing for the U.S. Government.

Back then, I think Secret Service was correct in believing SY was just not a very good organization. I certainly would not argue with that. But by in the early '80s, even the Secret Service could see things were dramatically changing. The vehicles, equipment, training, and manpower numbers were substantially better. While the Secret Service can see this new level of professionalism, they do not necessarily want to acknowledge it. Not officially. So we have these pockets of silly resistance, a Secret Service agent on a perimeter trying to exhibit his superiority over all others. That kind of foolish stuff was still going on, but I saw a way to change that.

When I took over as DP chief, the first thing I did was make a call to my counterparts at the Secret Service. They have an organization called DPD, or Dignitary Protection Division. Isn't that amazing? *We're* the dignitary protective division. For some reason I can't remember the chief's name, but his first name was Ralph, and he was a great guy to work with, and his deputy was agent named Johnny Guy. Between Ralph and Johnny we began to have regular meetings. They had never been approached before to do stuff like this. We started coordinating and sharing information. We started coordinating on major events or joint details – joint details are where they might have the prime minister and we the foreign minister. We would start to coordinate our activities and even share responsibilities, like staffing a perimeter. When we had problems with a Secret Service agent, and assuming we were not at fault, I could pick up the phone and call Ralph or Johnny, and they would immediately resolve the issue. Problems began disappearing and mutual respect and mutual support would become the new normal.

I want to jump ahead, because this is very important, then we'll jump backwards. In 1984, Johnny Guy would retire from the secret service. He had 20 years in, he was 42 years old, and when he saw the retirement coming or saw he could retire, he called me and said, “Denny, I want to come join you guys...would you take me?” “Uhhhhh, yes!”

We set up a new division for Johnny, which we desperately needed, called protective liaison division, PLD. Now we have the dignitary protection division, the secretary's detail division, and the protective liaison division. We made Johnny Guy the GS-15 special agent division chief. His job, among others, was to establish better working relationships with everybody, and he had the personality and the contacts. He reached back to his old organization, the Secret Service, and he reached forward to the organizations where we didn't necessarily have established relationships. We didn't have bad relationships. We had good relationships with a lot of organizations, like U.S. Park Police, Washington Metropolitan Police Department, New York City Police Department, and especially the New York police intelligence division, and now we wanted good relations with the Secret Service. All through the combined efforts of many people. However, back to 1982.

*Q: Where were we, at the beginning of '82?*

WILLIAMS: I probably took over about the beginning of '82, about January of '82. There's a routine humdrum life that takes place in DP, since every day is to some degree the same and different. The phone calls come, and some things you see coming two or three or four weeks out and some things come in this afternoon. That's the kind of existence it was, reactive, to a great degree reactive. There were a lot of negotiations with the regional bureaus with IO, a lot of activity with protocol and then a lot of activity with various congressional staffs, because the congressmen do travel. What they want is not so much protection, but they want an escort to go with them on their delegations to do coordination with the embassy Regional Security Office and through it, with the local police.

*Q: And you could supply that.*

WILLIAMS: Of course.

*Q: Did you ever say no?*

WILLIAMS: Could we ever say no?

*Q: Did you ever say no?*

WILLIAMS: I'm sure I did, or at least I probably tried to say no. It was hard to say no to anybody truthfully, because more times than not we would be overruled. Washington is a political town, after all.

*Q: I can see where it would be. Nobody wants to be the person who says no and then something happens.*

WILLIAMS: That's exactly right. I always understood why they were asking, but what they couldn't see was we had limited manpower, real manpower constraints. When you're trying to effectively balance multiple taskings, you ask yourself, "Who has the

greatest need and the greatest risk? That forces you to say no. Sometimes a no would stick, and sometimes it would not. You know how this works, Peter. It's the Department!

*Q: I know how it works. One question that came to mind while you were speaking... You talked about manpower. Did you have women agents as well?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, of course. Why not? Women had already been liberated back then, Peter.

*Q: When did that start?*

WILLIAMS: Women agents?

*Q: Was it before your time?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, but not by much. There were a couple female agents on the job when I was hired in 1974. But certainly by '73, '74, we were hiring quite a few female agents, because I can remember having them with me on details and things. In DP, one of my agents-in-charge was a woman. Grace Dailey had come from the U.S. Park Police. She really hated shift work, the three shifts, and in Park Police you have to work shift work. So being a college graduate, she looked for a way to get out of the Park Police, and she came to us. I think Grace joined around 1976, and by 1981 or 1982, she was senior enough and was one of my agents-in-charge in DP.

Female agents were pretty much everywhere by then, throughout the organization. It's always harder on women obviously, especially if they have children or want to have children. There is just no particularly good answer, and the family challenge remains an issue for most females in law enforcement.

*Q: I would just think that since security services are more macho, if you will, it becomes even harder for women to fit into that aspect of the Foreign Service than it might be for some of the other specialties.*

WILLIAMS: I think probably DS is not quite as macho as perhaps an outsider might think it is. I think it's changed today significantly, but I think back then we were still to some degree a gentleman's and gentlewoman's game. The world had not quite devolved to the extent it has today. Back in the day, we mostly worried about crazy people, and occasionally organized threats. By the mid to late '80s, the world started getting dramatically more dangerous, as I would find out in Cairo.

*Q: In this position in DP did you find that the Department was giving you the resources you needed?*

WILLIAMS: No, not really. The problem was the DS/SY still was incredibly short of agents. I knew where every field office agent was. I had a wall board and I literally tracked every DS agent in every field office across the United States, so when I would

call a field office and say, "I need four bodies from you," and they'd say, "Oh, I don't have any bodies," I'd say, "Where's Jackson?" "Oh, well I guess I can make him available." That's how bad it was. There were still too few people trying to do too many things. Domestically, DS has the dual responsibilities of criminal investigations and protective security. There were some other functions as well, such as supporting all the various overseas programs. There's a headquarters function that's involved in physical and technical security, upgrading overseas systems, computer security, construction security, and on and on. There's International Programs and High Threat Programs, which manage most overseas operations including the RSOs. There are over 220 regional security offices overseas. Add to this the Marine Security Program, Local Guard Program, DS training operations in multiple locations, and on and on. All these programs and activities take people to manage them and resources to fund them. Back in the early '80s, there was an enormous demand for agents for all sorts of things.

**[End of Tape 3a]**

*Q: We're on tape 3b now. You were saying how many agents were available.*

WILLIAMS: We were down to 60 or 70 agents among all the field offices. You can barely operate with those few people. You could operate a couple of details if they weren't more than about 10 to 20 people, but the competition is trying to complete investigations. Many times we had to go to headquarters units and get agents out of them. So there was this absolutely insidious rivalry between those who wanted to do investigations only, and those who wanted to do protection. No side prevailed, so we just limped along.

There were simply too few resources, agents in this case, available to do either one correctly. As a consequence we often did escorts when we should have been doing small protective details, or small details when we should have been doing complete, large detail packages. On the other hand, we did have more and better properly equipped police vehicles, better weapons, radios, and all the paraphernalia of the trade, so some things had improved. Most DS activities within that time frame, the early '80s, were a collection of compromises.

*Q: Did DP grow when you were there?*

WILLIAMS: No. DP, the office, did not grow. The field offices grew eventually. Our structure was actually quite good, and DP today hasn't significantly changed. However, as an aside, DP today does not have major special events. Special events has now been established as its own division, because it takes so much advance planning for a special event, literally weeks and months of advance planning and coordination with other police agencies. But back in the day, my DP did it all, excluding the Secretary.

For example, we did the Williamsburg Economic Summit, and Jeff Bosworth was the agent – he was one of my AICs – that I put in charge of the summit. Putting him in charge didn't alleviate me of any of the responsibility for the summit, so I was very much

involved. It was just too big of an event. It's just that he handled all the day-to-day planning and putting things together. To do something like the Williamsburg Summit, we must have had over 200 agents there because of all of the foreign ministers that were there in Williamsburg. Much of Washington DS just closed down as agents went to Williamsburg.

When we do something of that magnitude, like the Williamsburg Economic Summit, the amount of planning and organization that goes into that is just incredible. Everything has to be considered. We were not just handling protection of the individuals and the venue, but we had to handle all emergency services. We, the State Department, hosted a major conference at the Wye Plantation in Maryland. We arranged to have a fire truck and ambulance on site 24 hours a day, because there was no close by emergency response capability. We arranged for the Maryland Natural Resources Police to patrol the adjacent waterways, the Maryland State Police to increase patrols on the roads and be present at the Plantation 24/7 as well. We surveyed the nearest hospital so we would know how to get there if we had to. None of these were needed for the Williamsburg Economic Summit, because Williamsburg had all the necessary emergency support services.

To do that and then to plan out all the details, and where are they going to stay? Where are you going to put them up? What hotels? Then you have to contract with the hotels for a specified number of rooms. What are you going to have for your special teams? Where are you going to get a SWAT team if you need a SWAT team? By the late '80s DS would build its own SWAT teams, but back then DS had to go borrow one from some organization. The same for explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams, they too had to be borrowed until DS organically grew its own. Many things to consider, a real administrative, logistics, equipment, staffing, and resources challenge, each and every time.

Planning a major special event in and of itself takes one, two, or three, or any number of people literally weeks and months. The public sees only the surface protective activities, and none of the organization that made it possible. It is one of the reasons DS agents are, overall, very effective managers of people and resources.

We really should not have had major events as part of DP, because it was simply too much for us to do. It would take one of my AICs completely out of the picture for two months or three months, completely. A major event like the Williamsburg Economic Summit is all an AIC could do for weeks, months. He/she couldn't go on trips, because of all the coordination meetings, arranging for hotel rooms, scheduling EOD teams, getting all those uniformed police lined up to supplement coverage, setting up a cordoned area around the whole place. These are enormous events. When you see them from the inside, you have a new appreciation.

*Q: This was usually in coordination with other agencies and local police forces and so forth?*

WILLIAMS: Generally, the Secret Service is our closest sister organization in the federal government. Thanks to the things we would accomplish from '81 to '85 while I was there, and a lot of hard work by many of us, and to the special efforts made by former Secret Service agent Johnny Guy, who was now a DS agent, everything got better. The problems we would had with the Secret Service really came to an end. Yes, there's a little bit of a rivalry, but Secret Service agents have quit and come with us so they could work overseas, and I'm sure DS agents have quit and gone with them, so they could kick in more doors. We are very, very similar. We, DS, have the advantage of Foreign Service, if that appeals to you.

*Q: I guess depending upon the type of special event, some other agency might have the lead.*

WILLIAMS: Good question.

*Q: At the Williamsburg Economic Summit I suppose it would be the Secret Service rather than the DS whereas ministerial would be you, or not necessarily?*

WILLIAMS: If it were ministerial, it would be us. If it were heads of governments, chiefs of state, it would be Secret Service.

*Q: I'd like to talk more about it. Are these event something where all kinds of local and state and other police and everybody who could get their finger in wants to do it? Is somebody else in charge and you have a piece of it?*

WILLIAMS: I want to come back to that. But for the Olympics in LA, the Los Angeles Police Department was the lead agency. It was truly one of the best run events I've ever seen, and there's a good reason for that.

Let's go back to some of these others for just a moment. The special events were the biggest things we did in DP. You run a detail for Mrs. Marcos, okay. I assign one of my AICs, he picks up 14 agents, they meet her in New York, and life goes on, and they go to Club 66. Did I tell you about Club 66?

*Q: Well, you certainly told me about Mrs. Marcos! How come you're letting another agent cover her instead of helping her out yourself?*

WILLIAMS: Because I had my fill of Mrs. Marcos, the truth of it is! She was a nice enough lady, but enough is enough. Also, being the chief of DP brought management responsibilities that really precluded a Mrs. Marcos. She was coming to New York so often that she bought a townhouse on 66<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan. We immediately dubbed it Club 66, because it had a disco on the top floor! I went up there once. I sent myself to New York to inspect the detail or something like that just to see Club 66, walked out thinking, wow, when money is no object. She did love to party.

In any event, most of those things just ran themselves. You get the request, you accept the request, then you assign the AIC. They make the calls for however many agents we agreed would be needed. After a while, this becomes fairly routine and a bit easier.

There were relatively few – although they would happen – absolute emergencies that show up out of nowhere. A foreign minister is flying in via Dulles Airport in an hour and a half. That would occasionally happen, but it was not the norm for obvious reasons. Most embassies could see this coming, weeks in advance, or if not months.

Generally, the protective details were pretty routine, but planning for those major special events like the Williamsburg Economic Summit, the Wye Plantation Conference and the 1984 Olympics tests your organizational skills and your ability to plan. These are all written plans, by the way. These are not just on the back-of-a-napkin kind of operation. Somewhere in there, too, I think we've still got Yasser Arafat showing up periodically at the United Nations. He's still our highest risk protectee, by far. We had a whole city of Jewish folks who would like to see him dead, so we just had to keep him alive. He always brought these thugs with him, as did the Liberian foreign minister. Oh, God. It was rather hard, sometimes, to like the people you protecting, but God, duty and country, and all that stuff.

*Q: I was on the Liberia desk about that time. I wonder if we dealt with each other on some of these horrible Liberian cases!*

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: Maybe! I had the Liberian foreign minister smoking dope in the back of a follow car.

*Q: That's the one, yeah!*

WILLIAMS: Is that the one?

*Q: That's the one! I think he was the deputy head of state rather than the foreign minister.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, that's right, you are correct, he was the deputy. When we took him to the airport we made him go through the walk-through metal detectors. Typically we'd walk him around. Not this time. No way.

*Q: I remember getting a very, very nasty rejoinder from SY at the end of that!*

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: They were horrible! They were horrible!

*Q: But we're digressing a little bit.*

WILLIAMS: But we digress. I know. Why don't we talk about Prince Charles, he was fun. I assigned myself as his AIC.

*Q: OK, talk about Prince Charles. That would be fun.*

WILLIAMS: That was fun. The request came in that Prince Charles was coming to the U.S. for about a two week visit, so I did assign myself. As chief of DP I said, "Self. You're his AIC." Mostly I was curious, and it was time for me to get out and do something anyway.

What I remember most is I... I'm not sure if I told you this before. No, I shouldn't have told you this before. I put in a request for 35 agents. I didn't put in a request. I went forward to my boss who was the director of protection and said, "We need 35 agents." I got a phone call from my boss who said, "Could you come up here to the front office and kind of explain why you need 35 agents?"

Did I tell you this one already?

*Q: No, I don't think so.*

WILLIAMS: So I'm talking to the director of investigations who doesn't want to give me 35 agents. I have the director of protection here, and I've got the director of investigations. Lou Kachulis was his name. I'm saying, "And the follow car has this many people in the advance car, and the hotel, this would be the hotel," and I'm trying to explain how you use 35 agents. I'm literally walking them through it, as if they were kindergarteners, because I know he doesn't understand any of this. After spending maybe 20 minutes of explaining why I needed this number of agents on the traveling team, and then more for the advances to include next city advances, I am still getting that glazed eyes look. Finally, he looks at me and he says, "Yeah, yeah, but can you do it with six?" to which I said, and I shall put this in the correct language, "Fuck it. *You* do it with six!" I'm thinking, "Do we want Charles dead? Do we really want him killed, because of our inability to do this correctly?" That was the kind of management we really had back in the good old days – that weren't so good. Ultimately I got the 35 agents I asked for. I would have refused to do the detail with only six agents. That's just asking for trouble. Even with 35 agents...

*Q: The threat would have been Irish Republican Army or something like that?*

WILLIAMS: No, I wasn't even worried about the IRA. The IRA has never committed a crime in this country against a Brit. Never. The reason was there's so much support for the IRA from Irish immigrants and those of Irish decent here in this country, that the IRA wouldn't endanger their support by killing someone like Prince Charles in this country. That would jeopardize the money supply in an instant. So kill him there, in the U.K. that is, but don't kill him here.

I wasn't worried about that. When you have somebody like Prince Charles you worry about crazies. The people like Prince Charles and highly notable figures, whether it's Britney Spears or it's Prince Charles, Princess Diana, attract crazies. There's your biggest threat...the unknown. I'm not worried about a terrorist group; I'm worried about some crazy who believes if he kills Prince Charles, if he kills Diana, they'll live together in eternity forever. I mean something...

*Q: This is pre-Diana, I suppose.*

WILLIAMS: This was not pre-Diana. Diana was not with him. He came with some guy friend and he was a nice enough guy. What I remember is meeting him up in New York, and we brought him down a special jet way and I remember about half way down the jet way he stopped, turned around, and said, "Who are you?"

I said, "Well, I'm Dennis Williams, Prince Charles." He said, "What are you going to be doing?" I said, "I'm going to be the agent-in-charge of your protective detail for the next two weeks," and he said, "I'm sorry for you," and we went down and got into the limo. Actually, he was an easy guy and fun guy to work with. In fact, somewhere over on my bookshelf there's a photograph of Prince Charles that he gave me. I actually kept it because it was kind of a special fun thing to do.

He was very easy to work with, and he listened to what we told him and what we wanted him to do. He was pleasant to be with, he's pleasant to be around, and rather easy to chat with. We flew around on Armand Hammer's private jet. Do you remember Hammer?

*Q: Oh, yes. I used to have lunch with him all the time. [being facetious]*

WILLIAMS: I knew you did! He probably came up here on his G-2. He had a Gulfstream, then Grumman Gulfstream, and he gave it to Charles for the time he was in the U.S. He traveled around the U.S. in this Gulfstream, and he basically went from one social event to the next social event. It was just a goodwill trip, but it was kind of all over the United States.

I traveled with this 35-man detail around him. It scared me many times. I was scared *many* times with him, if only due to the crush of humanity. There were just social events where I felt we weren't even in control of the situation, that we had lost control of the overall environment. Large numbers of people can be dangerous. In these social events, I was right behind him and to his right and had my hand on his belt. I had agents everywhere, but there were just so many people.

There were well-wishers and then there weren't well-wishers. There were strange people who would show up. We weren't necessarily controlling the crowds, because these were hosted by local groups, and we weren't controlling the crowds. In those situations we focus on close in protection of the principal, and escape routes. On at least two occasions I sent agents over to confront difficult or unruly people, or folks who looked like stalkers or were otherwise out of place. If they really were a problem, we would give them a

choice – leave immediately or be arrested for interfering with federal agents in the performance of their duties. They always left, and never came back. We really were trying to take no chances. Since we did not control the people who were invited or who showed, we paid serious attention to watching the people who were watching us. It was extremely stressful and all the agents were on continuous high alert.

Press. You know, you have to feel sorry for these people.

*Q: Paparazzi?*

WILLIAMS: Sometimes they are true pain in the ass, but early on I learned that if you would just work with them, try to help get pictures and video, they would generally return the favor. When you worked with them, there was cooperation. They have tough jobs, no question. A paparazzi at the party was non-cooperative, and real pain. So I went over to “reason” with him. I needed a break from standing next to Charles. Gave him the same choice we gave others gave others: leave or be arrested for interfering. Nobody really wanted to see if we were bluffing, so he too left. No, we were not bluffing, although we would probably have the local police arrest him for disorderly conduct, a misdemeanor. Back in the day, if we arrested someone for interfering with federal officers in the performance of their duties, it was felony. That is serious, so we much preferred the local police do the misdemeanor disorderly conduct arrest. These people, whose strange behavior got our attention, were what we most feared. Crazies. You watched everybody for atypical behavior and the location of their hands.

*Q: Apparently you were really scared of the “crazies”?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, very much so. In these scenarios, you fear for the life of your principal, in this case Charles, and what it would mean if something were to happen to him. Rarely do you think about you own safety. Just remember, Reagan was shot by John Hinckley.

*Q: Was he generally staying in hotels or with dignitaries?*

WILLIAMS: No, he stayed in hotels. We were always around him. I mean literally... generally all around him. Our rooms cocooned his room and, of course, this was a 24-hour detail, so we had four agents on residence watch, or RW, continuously, and we also had uniformed police officers assisting as well.

*Q: These are...somebody sits outside his door all night?*

WILLIAMS: There are typically a couple of agents and uniformed officers controlling the hallway. We might alarm and put cameras in the fire stairwells ensure no one surprised us from those directions. The RW agents would handle the Command Post, or CP, duties such as monitoring the radios, handle the phone calls and log the detail activities. So typically, we would have an agent on his hotel door, one in the elevator lobby, agents in the CP, all supplemented by uniformed police officers or plain clothes

officers. If we could not place the vehicles in a hotel secure parking area – and many actually have these secure parking areas – then we would have to have at least one agent securing the cars. By the way, this is a big deal for local police jurisdictions, so they were usually pretty good at stepping up to the plate.

*Q: Not only stepping up to the plate, but did they sort of consider you the experts and happily offer help, and understood that you were in charge, and do what was necessary?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. There was no question *who* was in charge. They were always a huge help and often helped off-set our manpower shortages. Generally, we would use them to help control vehicular and pedestrian access to venues, and to help with crowd control. They would usually provide a marked lead police cars or two, and sometimes motorcycles for clearing traffic. One of our agents would always be in the lead police car to ensure effective communications.

*Q: It was kind of a thrill for them being able to help out on something like this?*

WILLIAMS: Well, yeah! They loved it because most of these police organizations don't get to do stuff like this very often. We do this day after day, after day, after day, after day, but for them this is a big deal. You have some lieutenant or captain assigned to coordinate with the detail, so it was a big deal for them. When you went someplace you had a police lead, a police follow, and you'd have police there on site when you got there, and we needed them. We really did need them. We made sure at the end of our stay, Prince Charles would go over to as many police as possible, and then shake hands and thank them. He was very good at these small touches of grace.

Unlike the Secret Service, we always treated our police partners respectfully and tried to take care of them. Back then, the Secret Service was terrible, and the FBI's even worse. They were infamous for treating local police like they were an unavoidable nuisance. We were very good about not doing that to local police or even to other federal agencies that we dealt with. For these big special events we would routinely borrow dozens and dozens of U.S. marshals and other federal agents. We'd go to Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, or ATF. We'd borrow 100, 150 agents from them and from the U.S. Marshals, and we never treated them like second class citizens. They always wanted to come back and work with us, and we were glad to have them. We effectively blended them into all protective operations, but under DS leadership.

*Q: This was for the Prince Charles visit as well? Would some of your 35 people have been from other agencies?*

WILLIAMS: They were not. These were all DS people. The visit started in New York, and it did travel around the United States. Some of those memorable moments that I remember were being in the car with Armand Hammer in Texas. I can't remember why we went to Texas. There's an agent driver in a limo that we'd gotten out of the Dallas field office or Houston field office. I was in the front seat, and Armand Hammer's in the back with Prince Charles and there's police, our lead, up in front, and our follow car, and

a police follow car. Charles and Hammer started talking about Ronald Reagan. To this day I remember this. Armand Hammer says, “Ehhh, you know Ronnie. He ain’t the sharpest knife in the drawer, but he’s a nice guy.” Hammer laughs. All I can remember Prince Charles doing something like (throat clearing sounds). It’s everything I can do to keep from laughing up in the front seat! “Oh, ain’t the sharpest knife in the drawer, but he’s a pretty nice guy.” That’s the kind of stuff you just can’t make up. They don’t see you, and so the two guys in the front of the car simply do not exist in their world.

We had a formal event somewhere in the middle of the United States and, of course, I showed up in my tuxedo. I already knew from the schedule there was going to be this formal event. Typically the diamond agents, the agents that form the diamond around the principal, one in front, one on the left, one on the right, and one in the rear. The AIC is not part of the diamond and is the closest to the principal. The diamond agents will show up in tuxedos if that is what the dress is. The other agents who are standing posts, vehicles, advance agents, et al., will be in business suits.

I remember showing up at his hotel room door. That was at 7:30, and 7:15 I showed up at his door, knocked on his door. He let me in.

*Q: What do you call him, by the way?*

WILLIAMS: I never call him anything.

*Q: Sir?*

WILLIAMS: Sir...maybe an occasional “Sir.” I never said Your Royal Highness, or your Highness. First of all it grates on me, as an American to use those terms of royalty. I am not much of a royalty buff and mostly believe it is anachronistic.

*Q: And you bowed of course, whenever you’d see him.*

WILLIAMS: No. I never bowed. Where are you going with this Peter?

*Q: Curtsied?*

WILLIAMS: Nope! Didn’t bow, didn’t curtsy, didn’t genuflect, or make submissive grunting sounds.

*Q: I’m sorry I interrupted.*

WILLIAMS: No, it was a good question. I never called him really anything. When you got him alone and were sitting on the G-2 flying around the United States he’d ask about family, where do you all live, what do you like to do, and on and on. He was a regular guy, to the extent he can be a regular guy. He’s socially adept, but you know we’re all socially adept, too. We can play this game in reverse. He would answer the questions as

well, and was very relaxed. A very pleasant person to be around, and very easy to work with since he understood his security depended, to a great degree, on him.

*Q: Did you ask him where he went to school, where he grew up?*

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: Who's your grandmother? How about your mother? What did your father do? I haven't talked about Prince Philip and that is a whole other story.

*Q: I'm sorry I started!*

WILLIAMS: Back to the anecdote. For some special event, I walked in his suite wearing my tuxedo, and for some reason I think he expected me not to show up in a tuxedo. I remember he walked across the room, and he was laughing the whole time, and he said, "I must see," and he took my tuxedo and parted it. He wanted to see all the stuff I was carrying: .357 revolver in a shoulder holster, speed loaders, radio, wires for microphone and earpiece, collapsible baton, Mace, handcuffs, and who-knows-what-else? He said, "How do you walk?" He had a good sense of humor. He was fun.

*Q: Did he bring any of his own security with him?*

WILLIAMS: One guy...just one.

*Q: And was it easy to get along with him?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah, very much so. I have always found the Brits easy to work with.

*Q: This would have been about that time of the Falkland Islands disagreement.*

WILLIAMS: The British foreign minister – this is another one of those I assigned myself – was regularly coming to Washington. Foreign Minister Pym was flying in and out of Washington on pretty much a regular basis. I think Charles was there at the same time. Charles was there for a social visit, generating good will, etc., which is important as well. He didn't go to the White House or have any political or foreign policy activities. He didn't do anything like that, at least on this trip.

U.K. Foreign Minister Pym, for me, was a bit earlier than Charles. Pym was coming in, and I decided I would take Pym when he flew in. I thought this was an important enough time in history, that I wanted to be involved in this, so I appointed myself agent-in-charge of Pym's detail. It was not an especially big detail, maybe 14 agents. He stayed at the British embassy, so it was very easy to control what was happening since he stayed there. We were doing portal-to-portal protection, or door to door.

He was in the U.S. for foreign policy and intelligence reasons, as you would expect. He was probably back here every two or three weeks and stayed just a few days each time.

Again, a very good guy. Only one British security guy, because they knew we would take care of him, so the British security guy was just really there to coordinate with us, talk with us and assist with whatever else we might need. It is very easy to work with the Brits, in part because we speak the same language and we share similar cultural values. Which reminds me of Winston Churchill's famous quip: two peoples separated by a common language. Got to love Churchill.

*Q: That raises a question, which I had wanted to ask you before and forgot, whether language became a difficult issue in some of these protective details, if the protectee dignitary was not an English speaker.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, sometimes it did, and sometimes we had to have an interpreter supplied to us by protocol. Surprisingly, though, most of the dignitaries that we dealt with spoke English. Not surprising I should say. Not surprising.

The Iranians, I still remember to this day... The Iranians as you know, took our embassy staff hostage in 1979, if I recall correctly. By 1981 and 1982, they were coming to the UN General Assemblies, and they were still pretty much disliked by most Americans and were subjected to demonstrations. We went up – and I was with their protective detail – to their mission in New York City. I went over as Chief of Dignitary Protection, because they were notoriously difficult to deal with, but many of the staff who accompanied the foreign minister spoke English.

*Q: Most of them probably went to college here in the States.*

WILLIAMS: They probably did.

*Q: I would have thought more likely the French speaking Africans or Chinese or somebody like that would be less likely to speak English.*

WILLIAMS: If they did we'd just get somebody from protocol. We had little need to speak to the dignitaries themselves. Often that just didn't happen. They knew the drill, we knew the drill; their security people – if they had anybody – knew the drill. They did it our way, well, there was only one way: our way. Our way was okay for most of them. It wasn't a big deal, but protocol would provide some kind of linguist if we did require a linguist. They, protocol, did not have linguists but they would get them from somewhere, perhaps FSI and perhaps they contracted for them. Don't recall.

There's a parenthetical story here. I remember doing a Philippine State visit, and I was involved in it as chief of DP, and not as the AIC for Ferdinand Marcos. We held the coordination meeting in our office in DP. It should have been Secret Service's offices, because Secret Service had Ferdinand Marcos. We would have had Mrs. Marcos and the foreign minister, and they would have had President Marcos. We held the coordination meeting in our office, and I remember, this is the one time I remember a foreign national security being obnoxious. They demanded that President Marcos not see any demonstrators while in the U.S., and we were expecting demonstrations. I remember this U.S. Park Police major leaning over to the Filipinos and saying, "This is the United

States. This isn't the Philippines. We allow peaceful demonstrations in this country. That's just the way it is." Good for him.

*Q: Good for him!*

WILLIAMS: Good for him, is right. The rest of us said, "Yeah. Yeah. What do you think we're going to do with the demonstrators, take them off and beat them. This *is* the United States, and we *do* protect their right to demonstrate. That's when I realized that senior levels of U.S. law enforcement really are a whole lot smarter than they get credit for, and quite aware of and concerned with citizens' rights. There was unanimity between us, the Secret Service, U.S. Park Police, and MPD. It was good to see, and I found this attitude of concern for citizens' rights pretty well respected throughout federal law enforcement.

*Q: Okay, that might be a good place for us to call a pause.*

WILLIAMS: It is because we probably want to talk about the 1984 Olympics. We talked about a lot of these other special events, but that was a very special event. I want to make one final comment. For all of these special events, whether it's the Williamsburg economic summit, or UN General Assemblies or whatever, they were always incredibly challenging and always very interesting. We actually hosted a First Wives Conference in D.C., too, that that was overseen by AIC Grace Dailey, one of my AICs.

*Q: Would you assign a woman to this, because it's a women's meeting?*

WILLIAMS: No. I assigned a woman to it, because she wanted to do it. She specially asked to do it, and why would I not let her do it? But no, there were no assignments based on gender or any other criteria. These sorts of things were done on a rotational basis.

*Q: In general would it make sense for a woman to protect a woman? I could see advantages certainly.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, there're may be advantages and no, I would not make decisions on the basis of just that. So AICs could be anyone, but if you were protecting a female dignitary, it was best to have some female agents assigned to the detail. There are a couple of aside stories here. One I want to mention, because it rekindled today, when I was out walking, listening to Samuel P. Huntington's Clash of Civilizations. I told you earlier we had ATF and marshals that often helped us at the UN General Assembly. I had a situation take place up in New York.

In New York City we would set up a very large operations center in a hotel. For example, in the Summit Hotel, we would take over all of the 16<sup>th</sup> floor, and half of that floor we would turn into a command post, with everything from communications, logistics, weapons, administration, vehicle issuance, EOD, to the operations floor itself, where we tracked details, and coordinated all activities. It's a big deal operation, and we track every detail as goes to its location at any given time. As the chief of Dignitary Protection, I would have had overall responsibility and authority. It's big time, and actually it works

quite well. The U.S Marshal coordinator would sit up there with me as would the ATF coordinator. We had a situation with a U.S. Marshal that I didn't learn about until after the fact.

You may recall in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that there was a little bit of a problem between Armenia and Turkey.

*Q: A tiny bit.*

WILLIAMS: A tiny bit. The Turks decided to slaughter a bunch of Armenians, and just like everybody else in that part of the world they never forget anything...ever. We had a Marshal of Armenian ancestry who was assigned to protect the Turkish deputy prime minister, and she refused to do it.

I didn't know about that at the time, but eventually it was conveyed back to the U.S. Marshal coordinator, who told me. I went nuts. I got that U.S. Marshal coordinator in my office and said, "I want her on a plane out of this city by tonight." I want her out of here. Now. She is a United States Federal Marshal. How dare she put some historical thing, in which she's never been a participant, over her duties as a United States Marshal. I will not have her here. Furthermore, you will tell her supervisor why she has been kicked out of this city." I sent her home. I'd have fired her, if I had the power; I would have fired her. I thought this is the worst of all possible things. We cannot have federal law enforcement, or for that matter Foreign Service officers or anybody else putting cultural, ethnic, religious, or other heritage ahead of their responsibilities and duties as a United States government official. I found that appalling.

*Q: Oh, sure, on that basis, who would you get to protect...Yasser Arafat?*

WILLIAMS: [laughter] "I want all my Jewish agents to step forward!"

*Q: Good. I think this has been a good introduction to your Washington experience. Next time we'll talk about the Olympics.*

WILLIAMS: We'll talk about the Olympics. They are hard to forget.

*Q: And then more on to the next overseas assignment, I guess it was.*

WILLIAMS: Yup.

*Q: Today is Sunday, September 2, 2007. This is Peter Eicher continuing the interview with Dennis Williams.*

WILLIAMS: Why don't we go ahead and do a sound check and see if this microphone is in the right place.

*Q: Good idea. Okay, Denny, when we left off last time we were going to talk about your Olympic security experience.*

WILLIAMS: That was something. It was the first time I really was involved with Olympic security, a massive planning and operational undertaking. Obviously when you plan for something like this, the planning goes on for many months before. I think we had something like 15 protectees in L.A., but it was a strange, odd mixture of people. This is not a political event, so you draw people like Prince Charles, Princess Anne, and folks of that type, and not so much the government officials or politicians. There was a broad spectrum of people who came out there. What was interesting is that Los Angeles had been anticipating this for months and months and months. We truly believed we would have gridlock on the streets of Los Angeles. I'll come back to that a little bit later.

As we prepared for this, there were numerous trips to L.A., and we had agents out there working as advance and coordination staff. Bill Rathburn was the commander with the Los Angeles Police Department, or LAPD, who was the nominal coordination lead for all agencies. He did just an absolutely outstanding job corralling all the disparate federal, state and local agencies involved.

What we do in a situation like this is in the months before the event takes place, we'll go out and start working with one or more hotels. We will reserve hotel rooms based on estimate of how many agents we anticipate will be needed. Part science, part educated guesswork. All that's done fairly early on, and then we'll take a suite of rooms, block them together into a command post. We know how to do this because we'd been doing it for many years, and at the United Nations General Assembly every September. Those usually go for about three weeks in New York, so the UNGAs were good training for how we did something like this.

What made this unique, was the vast distances separating the venues in the Los Angeles area. They're sprawled all over the place, but eventually we'd set up a joint command post with the Secret Service, our sister agency. Literally, we would be right next to them so we could go back and forth between command posts. They had a handful of dignitaries out there. Not as many as we did. Strange dignitaries like the King of Tonga came in for the Olympics. Our command posts also shared coordinators from the LAPD, California Highway Patrol, LA Sheriff's Office, and others. In addition, there was an all-agencies event command post run by the LAPD in the Piper Building. Some 50+ representatives were present in the event command post.

*Q: The King of Tonga, really?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, and all I remember is that he was enormous, *enormous*. He was huge! Well, I'm getting off track. In any event we took over one of the hotels for staff and set up everything for the DS and USSS command posts. We were actually staying quite a ways away north of Los Angeles, because of the hotel room problem in the city and it was just too expensive, too congested. We needed a place where we could stage cars and things like that, so we went up towards Glendale.

*Q: So you got the good Los Angeles commuting experience.*

WILLIAMS: We did! I think we stayed in a Hilton or Sheraton. Anyway, we took over the majority of rooms there. Not for our command post. That was downtown, but agents stayed up in the Glendale area. When we got out there we were anticipating the worst in regards to traffic, and in fact what actually occurred was that most people in Los Angeles took a vacation and went away, or just stayed home. There was no traffic. There was nobody on the freeways. The city was amazingly empty and devoid of people, cars and people. It was quite a surprise, in fact, we were astounded!

I think one of the most memorable events in my life – and there were a lot – was being at opening and closing ceremonies at the Los Angeles Coliseum. What was unveiled, of course, was John Williams' iconic music, which would become the standard for the Olympic music from that moment forward. It was spectacular to watch the teams come marching in, one by one, colorfully attired with flags flying. Quite an experience and I was grateful for the opportunity to be there.

One of the side benefits of doing something like this is we have passes to everything. For every venue site, we had law enforcement passes allowing for unfettered access, so we could go watch Olympic events anywhere we wished. Since I was the senior guy in charge for DS, most of what I did was management, liaison and problem solving. I had a deputy who wanted to be in charge of day to day stuff, so I let him be in charge a lot. With radios and telephones and such you can't get very far away from anything.

*Q: They had mobile phones way back then?*

WILLIAMS: No, they didn't, that is, we did not have mobile or cell phones. Landline phones and a really good UHF radio system. We were never out of touch. I didn't get my first mobile phone until 1988, the old Motorola brick, as it was known.

*W: So it was just dereliction of duty with radios. Okay.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, pretty much. We had radios. Car radios, base station radios for our command post and hand-held radios for every agent. Everyone always had a radio on, and we had a good repeater system. IRM came out and set up all the receiver and repeater stations, so we had excellent radio communications across the entire LA metro area. What was IRM called back then?

*Q: IRM?*

WILLIAMS: I think it was the Office of Communication or something like that. They came out and enhanced the existing LA radio system, to ensure we'd have much broader area coverage. Typically, we only worked in downtown Los Angeles, but now we're good virtually everywhere in the Los Angeles Metropolitan area.

*Q: Let's step back from the opening ceremony to the preparations a little bit. How long before the Olympics did you start working on this?*

WILLIAMS: At least a year in advance we had assigned Dignitary Protection and Los Angeles Field Office staff.

*Q: A whole year before! How many agents did you have to bring in for it*

WILLIAMS: We probably brought in a couple hundred. Fifteen protectees is not, believe it or not, a large number of protectees. That's about the ballpark figure I remember.

*Q: I would have expected more, and those were mainly non-heads of state, foreign ministers, that kind of thing?*

WILLIAMS: Well, yes. I remember... No, not even that. Generally, it was not foreign or other government ministers. Saudi officials came in, part of the royal family. Princess Anne was there, and Prince Philip was there.

*Q: Was Princess Anne competing, or was she just there to watch?*

WILLIAMS: Although she is an equestrian, she was only there to watch. She was not competing. She was a wonderful lady. As it turned out we had pizza in her suite one night, about 30 of us. She was a delightful lady, truly and I remember her running around in a sweatshirt or an old tee shirt or something and a pair of jeans, and I thought, "Hmmm, probably wouldn't be caught dead in UK dressed this way." She was very relaxed, quite friendly and with and zero pretense. "Just call me Anne." She was a very, very pleasant lady. A very nice woman. Agents enjoyed being on her protective detail.

*Q: Did she have to ask you to call her that because she doesn't have a last name?*

WILLIAMS: Well, we're pretty hard pressed to call them Prince and Princess.

*Q: ...and she's Windsor, I'm sure. In any event, you said Prince Philip was there as well.*

WILLIAMS: Prince Philip was there being his normal, unpleasant self, but not to the same degree as usual. You'll recall that from one of our previous discussions.

*Q: I do, yeah.*

WILLIAMS: Fortunately he was only there for a few days, but he was his consistently obnoxious self. It's just his personality. It's just the way he is. I stayed away from him, and didn't have anything to do with him.

*Q: Do you remember any of the other 15?*

WILLIAMS: No, not really. Truthfully I don't. There was a Japanese group, there was this one or that. However, since I was not down in the weeds with the day-to-day operations, I was less familiar with exactly who was there. I handled the senior level liaison and coordination with the other agencies, Commander Bill Rathburn, kept Washington informed, handled problems, resource issues, etc.

*Q: Nobody gave you any particular trouble in any way?*

WILLIAMS: No, not at all. In fact, from a protection point of view it was easy. We controlled all of the venues and sites. We, the collective "we" being the police, Secret Service, DS, or whomever, but the point being all Olympic locations were tightly controlled.

One of the most vivid memories I have is Bill Rathburn, the LAPD Commander, and he set up the Piper Center. It's a center on the edge of an airport someplace, a private airport, and he took over this huge building, huge building, and had maybe 50 or 60 desks facing an operations floor. It was the event coordination/command center for the entire Olympics, with representatives there 24/7 from every involved agency. This included fire and emergency services, LA emergency management staff, utility company staff, US Military representatives, and on and on.

Bill was there as the incident commander – that is, chief coordinator. That's hard to do when you're dealing with fiefdoms such as the FBI and the Secret Service, which have organizational egos the size of basketballs. It really is hard, but he was a fascinating guy to watch. He was a diplomat, he was smart, he knew when to crack a joke and when not to, and we all liked him very much. I think we let him, by default, be the person in charge, because it just worked to have someone like Bill in charge as opposed to one of the federal agencies. This was, after all, a Los Angeles event. It was their city, and they should be in charge.

But in this type of operation center all of us, Secret Service, Diplomatic Security, FBI, California Highway Patrol, LAPD, LA Sheriff's Office, various fire/rescue/ ambulance services, emergency management agencies, somebody representing the hospitals, and on and on and on, were there to ensure if something did happen, all the right players would present to effect resolution. If something happened, everybody would know about it simultaneously, and we could take any actions we needed to protect our protectees or to evacuate them from sites or whatever. I would add, parenthetically, that the California Highway Patrol was extraordinary and exemplary in its support to DS and the USSS. We could not have done it so well without them, and they were just great folks to work with.

*Q: My memory's failing me a little bit. This was after the Munich Olympics?*

WILLIAMS: I think it was after the Munich Olympics.

*Q: So there had been...*

WILLIAMS: Munich Olympics were in 1972.

*Q: '72. Okay. So there had been serious problems at Olympics before, and you had to be poised for potentially very serious problems.*

WILLIAMS: When you're working a protective detail obviously what you carry and how you staff it is to a great deal dependent on the notoriety of the protectee, or real and potential threats to the protectee. Princess Anne would be kind of toward the low end of the scale. Nice lady but not extremely well known. If she walked down the street, people would not pick her out of the crowd. Then you get up to the other end of the scheme, but no longer with us, someone like Yasser Arafat. I think I told you the only time I saw all agents wear bullet proof vests was with Yasser Arafat. We had dozens of agents assigned to Arafat, because when he goes to a site you have to own that site when he arrives. Nothing can be left to chance.

It's not so with Princess Anne who could be a lot more spontaneous, and we could be a lot more spontaneous as well. However, you never let a protectee go from one place to another without having advanced the site, that is, sending advance agents to site to control it. You know what I mean by advancing the site?

*Q: I presume you mean going to it and checking it out?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. We'll send a couple of agents or many more depending on the site and, if necessary, something called pre-posters where I'd take a half a dozen agents or a dozen agents, and once the advance agents get there, determine what the route into the building will be or the venue, wherever it is, they are the experts on that site. I mean the true experts. They know the ways in, the ways out, they know the emergency escapes. They know where to keep cars secretly if we need to do something clandestinely. They thoroughly know the site, but also will usually keep someone from building management or maintenance close at hand if even more knowledge is needed. This is all fairly well thought out.

Pre-posters are agents positioned before the arrival of the protectee, so that they can control the site, the corridors, crowds, or whatever else is necessary. So when you get there and you get out of the car and you go back to get your principal out of the limousine, nothing moves. By the way, those limousine doors have a little special latch that most of the public don't know about. With the armored limousines we use, you can't just grab the handle and open the door. It won't open. There is a very clever latch kind of hidden in the mechanism that you have to know that it's there, and you have to know how to open it.

The procedure that takes place is, the agent-in-charge who rides in the right front seat of the limousine gets out of the car, goes back to the door, stands there until all other agents are in place, and he – or she – opens the door to allow the protectee to exit. The door doesn't open until everything and everybody are in place. You're led in then by your advance agents, because you've never seen this site. The agents on the protective detail

that form the diamond, literally a diamond of agents around the protectee – somebody in the front, somebody to the left, somebody to the right, and somebody behind, and that's the close in protection. The diamond agents follow the advance agents, and the pre-posters and other agents control the crowd, the vehicles, the hallways, the actual event venue, et al.

**[Break]**

*Q: It's Sunday, September 2. I'm continuing on tape 4a with the interview of Dennis Williams. Denny, you were just talking about the diamond as you escorted people into the Olympics in 1984 in Los Angeles. I was going to ask you in a situation like that is there some time at which the diamond has to break off? Clearly Princess Anne isn't going to have four extra seats for her security people, is she?*

WILLIAMS: The diamond does not break off. In fact, typically as the agent-in-charge, if she's sitting in the stadium, theatre or whatever, typically the agent-in-charge would sit behind her, but there would be an agent in front of her, there'll be an agent to the left of her and an agent to the right of her. The diamond concept of close in protection is generally maintained when in a public forum. Obviously in a private or diplomatic environment, this would be adjusted to the circumstances.

*Q: But not directly necessarily. I mean, she might want to sit next to Prince Philip or somebody?*

WILLIAMS: And she can. His agent-in-charge would be behind him. There are fairly strong protective concepts that are followed, but not without flexibility or situational adjustments. A lot of this is also judgment. What the agent-in-charge's job is if anything happens, their job is to cover and evacuate the protectee. There was an agent-in-charge assigned to Princess Anne, if we were to use her as an example, if something were to happen, an unruly member of the crowd runs across drunk and yells, "Your Highness! Your Highness!" whichever the agent is closest to that person is going to take him down. The AIC's job is to pick her up, literally if necessary, and remove her from harm's way. The other agents would close the diamond, and the AIC would cover and evacuate. Evacuate might be to the armored limousine or to a saferoom. The advance agents would assist with this cover and evacuation. Other agents and supporting police have the responsibility of handling the problem. The agent-in-charge does not handle the problem, but rather ensures the safety of the protectee.

I don't know if I told you. The reason the agent-in-charge walks slightly behind and to the right of the protectee is to be able to grab his or her belt or her jean's line or whatever it is and push her to the ground if you have to, or to grab her and pull her away, literally yank her away and take her in the opposite direction of the threat. One or two agents are left to handle the threat, whatever it is, along with local police. The other members of the diamond and pre-posters collapse on you, and that becomes an evacuation team event. The whole idea is to get the protectee back to the armored limousine, or to some other safe area.

Advance agents typically identify safe rooms or safe areas that are defensible. If there were an untoward event, vehicles would likely be moved to an inside garage or alternate exit-out location. You will recall when Reagan was attacked, the Secret Service immediately put him back in the armored limo, which then fled the scene. Advance agents are always with the AIC and protectee, and they know where to go and the ways out. Those advance agents go with the principal and the agent-in-charge, if you evacuate the principal to the safe room. The safe room is meant to give you time to plan next moves or to await the arrival of reinforcements such as additional agents or local police, or, if needed, emergency medical services.

We and the Secret Service very well might share the same safe room, if we both have protectees at a site. It might be an office suite someplace that is defensible and from which we alternate pathways out of the site. This is why advances by agents at the various venues is so terribly important.

*Q: When we see the VIP boxes at the Olympics, are two-thirds of the people there security people rather VIPs?*

WILLIAMS: It depends. We'll often share responsibilities. For example, if we have a VIP box and the agent-in-charge is almost always in very close proximity to the principal. But the other agents, if we control the whole box, might back off and take perimeter positions. The more situational control you have of an immediate area, the more you would loosen up a bit. However, the AIC is never far from the protectee.

I have to tell you, this becomes much more elaborate than you think. At a place like the coliseum there were snipers or, I should say, counter-sniper teams...

*Q: Okay, that's better!*

WILLIAMS: ...provided by Los Angeles PD that were up in the various high places. They had scoped rifles watching the crowd the whole time. Whenever you have VIPs out there, you have to have that kind of protection. There are, in fact, multiple layer of protection, beginning at the outermost perimeter and concluding with the agent diamond. Supporting players would be advance agents, pre-post agents, local police, counter-sniper teams that could be from DS, Secret Service or the local PD, and on and on.

It's a very, very coordinated and complex event. Every time we did a vehicular move in Los Angeles, we moved with California Highway Patrol, and they're great to work with. They're absolutely fantastic to work with. LAPD is a little more mixed, but in general very good. Los Angeles sheriff's department is a very tough organization, a rather no-nonsense law enforcement agency. We enjoyed working with them as well.

The LA Sheriff actually saved us one time. This was before I was overseas. DS had taken the Shah of Iran's mother to some hilltop home in Los Angeles. The retreat was attacked by hostile mob of Iranians against the Shah, as I recall. We had like a dozen agents there

with her. The mob got on the property and started coming up the hill towards the house. The agents used fire hoses on the protestors. The situation went from bad to terrible in minutes. The agents in the house were preparing to shoot people. Much of this was filmed by helicopters that were circling the house.

Dozens if not hundreds of these protestors came up on all sides of this hilltop retreat, and it was in LA county, not the city, so LA County Sheriffs responded. In the interim the agents had to evacuate the mother and the others in the official party into a safe room, brought out the Uzi submachine guns, and had made the decision to shoot to kill if they came in the house. That's how serious it got. We actually had agents outside with a fire hose spraying the protestors on the hillside.

After about 15 minutes of this, LA County Sheriffs arrived *en masse* with dozens of police cars and dozens and dozens of deputies, and they just beat those protestors into the ground. I mean, I'm serious, because again, all was caught on video tape by helicopters. Our agents never fired a shot, and never had to physically confront any of the protestors. The most the agents did was get wet using the firehose, but it was that close to disaster. You have to be careful. You never know.

*Q: Back to the Olympics. I presume this was regarded in DS as kind of fun duty that people wanted to do. Did you have lots of volunteers?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. Everybody wanted to go to the Olympics. Everybody knew for the most part it would be low key, and it was low key. Even Prince Philip, who was normally nasty beyond all belief, rather chilled out and was more relaxed. I've already told you, Princess Anne had pizza parties and things, so it was much different. The entire venue was so well managed and so well protected by local and state police, that the detail agents could relax a bit as well.

One of my more vivid recollections, though. I didn't bring up the King of Tonga lightly. I remember going to the coliseum one day and I had several observations. One, I went there because we had a lot of protectees there watching all of these things they do in coliseum central field, the disc throwing and the javelin throwing, and all those kinds of things. It was the first time it dawned on me that most of the people in the crowd were sitting there with some sort of television to get a play by play as to what was taking place, because when you look down at the field, no one was really announcing what was going on. You had to understand intuitively who was doing what over there, because multiple events were going on at the same time on the field of the coliseum. And then you realize, "I don't have a clue what's going on here." Anybody who's in the know has some sort of little TV.

*Q: It's 1984. A TV probably wouldn't be too little, and I guess no jumbotron screens to show you replays and so forth.*

WILLIAMS: No. They had screens and they were showing things, but there was no announcing. That was the most bizarre thing, but I guess the question is what would they

announce? Which one would they have announced? I'm one of those people sitting there thinking God, back in our command post we have this huge big screen TV, and they tell us what's going on. We had rented this very big screen, rear projection TV for the command post so we would know what's going on. The folks in the stadium stands had their earplugs in, and I'm sure they had a sack full of batteries to keep those little tube TVs going while they were there. They were there all over the place, and it is funny what you still remember years later.

This was the day that the Secret Service agent-in-charge of the Tongan King, sought me out and said, "Hey, can you lend me some agents?" I said, "Yeah, sure." We did have some extra agents there waiting for this or waiting for that, and he said, "I'm out of agents. Would you mind helping us get him into the stands?" Wow, this is a first! Secret Service agents were kind of behind him pushing him up the stairs. The guy was gigantic, I guess the sign of affluence or something in Tonga...he was huge! Anyway, our agents and the Secret Service agents kept him safe. He did not stay long.

*Q: The Tongans are all pretty big, and he's one of the bigger ones. He was probably getting pretty old by that time.*

WILLIAMS: I don't know. I don't have that much of a recollection. I was a ways away, and just watching this whole event. Overall, the Olympics went flawlessly, a tribute to all the law enforcement officers involved.

*Q: This is the one the Russians boycotted, huh?*

WILLIAMS: You have a better recollection than I do. I think you're right, they did boycott it.

*Q: I think the Romanians may have been the only Soviet bloc country that showed up. Wasn't that the time that... I can't remember which Romanian gymnast was the darling.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes! You're right! You know that's almost going back a quarter of a century. I was thinking of Nadia Comăneci, but that may or may not be correct. She was famous.

*Q: It's going back there.*

WILLIAMS: That's scary. But in any event, as I said the roads were clear, there was nobody around, or so it seemed. We ran out of cars at the field office. No surprise, I mean, how long does it take to go through your protective vehicles that you have with installed lights and sirens when you need 40 or 50 vehicles every day. However, we had anticipated this so we bought 50 portable federal siren systems and light systems that we could move from rental car to rental car. We had a little, wired handheld control that you kept on the front seat, while all the electronic and power were in an aluminum container on the back seat or in the trunk. I think it was the back seat, though, not in the trunk. We

equipped our cars with these portable systems, and we went out and rented a bunch of Hertz Fords or whatever was available and large in size. Worked like a charm.

*Q: Hertz police cars!*

WILLIAMS: Hertz police cars. That's exactly right. Hertz would have crapped if they had known what we were doing with their cars. Running around the city of Los Angeles with lights and sirens on Hertz rental cars!

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: It was hilarious! The systems worked and everything. It was memorable for its lack of memories. Nothing went bad out there. Everybody had a good time.

*Q: It must have been one of your more fun times in your career, huh?*

WILLIAMS: It was. It really was. Being the chief of DP, that is Dignitary Protection, was the most fun domestic job I ever had ever. It was always interesting, challenging and often fun.

*Q: For the Olympics in particular or DP in general?*

WILLIAMS: DP in general. The Olympics in particular were a highlight. We had done – I think we talked about it earlier – an economic summit in Williamsburg, and that was all business. Those were very serious business events and because they are very high profile, you took those extremely seriously, and protection was much tighter. Out for the Olympics, people would dress casually. There was no one wearing a suit and tie. It just didn't make sense and it tended to attract attention. In that type of environment you would have stood out for what you were, and you didn't necessarily want to stand out and because it becomes obvious you are the first person to shot if there is attack. Anyway, you get the general idea.

*Q: So no suits and dark glasses and the whole bit?*

WILLIAMS: Nope, maybe we all kept our dark glasses. Don't misunderstand me. Everybody had business clothes, too. I had my tuxedo out there, because you have to be prepared to dress as the occasion demands. If there's a formal event in the evening you have to be there in a tuxedo or whatever business attire, whatever the occasion is. You can imagine what that makes for moving suitcases out there. It's horrible. It's just horrible. You've got to take huge suitcases, then you're always overweight, but fortunately the government pays for it now.

But we did it. We went from – never obviously shorts or flip flops or that kind of thing – dressed in Levis or slacks with some sort of covering over you, because it wasn't fashionable to have guns hanging out all over the place. You had to wear some sort of jacket or open shirt with a tee shirt underneath so the shirt covered the radio, the gun, the

handcuffs, and all the other crap that you're carrying. But mostly it was pretty relaxed with very few formal events. Although, there were a couple events where I ended up going in a suit. Mostly, I lived out of command post downtown.

We had agents in the Piper Center that we were connected to by an umbilical cord, so we knew what they knew, immediately. I mentioned before that the Piper Center was the operations and coordination center where all agencies were represented, 24/7.

Periodically I'd make trips down to the Piper Center just to see what was going on, say hi to Bill Rathburn and the other people, but there were no untoward events that took place in LA, certainly none that I remember. It was really trouble and incident free. The Secret Service and us, shared agents for the first time. For the first time we shared agents – remarkable.

*Q: You actually shared?*

WILLIAMS: They helped us, we helped them. If they were short of agents someplace, then we would loan them agents. I don't remember us borrowing agents from them, but for some reason the Secret Service just seemed understaffed.

As I told you, I went to several events, equestrian; I went to swimming; I went to the events in the coliseum. You know, we went around and tried to visit all the venue sites, and it was fascinating. As I mentioned to you earlier, we had passes for everything. But all good things come to an end, and the closing ceremonies in the coliseum were with Lionel Richie as the lead performer on the closing night ceremonies. You remember he was a hot ticket item back then.

*Q: He was big!*

WILLIAMS: He was really big. He was fantastic! The closing ceremonies in themselves just about brought you to tears because everything had worked so flawlessly, and you knew it. You knew it had, because I had an insider's view that others don't have, and I was there for the closing events as well. In fact, virtually all of our protectees were there for the closing event, so it was a massive security event for us and the Secret Service for the Closing Ceremonies. But again, nothing untoward happened, and it was just a spectacular event. I think if I ever were to go to another Olympics, I want to do two things: I want to go to the opening ceremonies, and I want to go to the closing ceremonies. You can get your TV out for those things in the middle. That's the only way you'll know what's going on anyway.

*Q: That's great. Sounds like a great experience. Was that close to end of your tour of duty?*

WILLIAMS: It was about a year from my departure. I think I assigned myself a couple more protective details to do. Sometimes, you just needed to get out of the office. So, I would periodically assign myself a detail. Did I talk to you about it?

*Q: You talked to me about some of them.*

WILLIAMS: Japanese? Did I talk to you about the Japanese?

*Q: I'm not sure about the Japanese. We did talk about Prince Charles.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, I assigned myself to Prince Charles, just for the fun of it. Then I assigned myself to the Japanese. He was the son of the Emperor of Japan, a prince. He wasn't the crown prince, whatever his name was, and his wife was a fun lady, and basically we just went on a short tour of the United States. Now why did I assign myself?

*Q: Because you speak Japanese.*

WILLIAMS: Of course! But, of course, they spoke excellent English! All I remember is she was a pistol. The princess was just an absolute riot, and we protected them together as a couple. We had a lot of agents on the detail, because while he was not the crown prince, he was the second in line to the crown for Japan. I thought it would be fun, and it was fun. It was not a business venture. It was a play trip. He came to the United States to go visit Colorado and the Rocky Mountains. We didn't get to go to the Grand Canyon, but we were elsewhere playing around in Colorado. They were fun to be with, but there were no levis and casual attire being worn. These were all business suit events, every one of them, even while sight-seeing in the Rocky Mountains.

*Q: Oh, my...in Colorado mountains?*

WILLIAMS: Maybe on the day trips they didn't wear ties, but they were mostly in business attire. They are reasonably formal people, and he was quite reserved although friendly. Of course, there was little point in trying to speak Japanese to them. I could speak Japanese to some of the aides, but they all spoke English too, so they would invariably answer in English. Just like living in Japan, or more correctly, *Nippon*.

The thing I remember most is we were flying, perhaps Los Angeles to Colorado. That would have been it, because I had already met them and she, the princess, had been very comfortable with us. But all I can recall is that I was sitting behind her as the agent-in-charge does. On the flight, I and another agent were sitting behind the Prince and Princess. This is normal protection protocol. We were in first class, so there were two other agents in first class as well, somebody off to their right and somebody in front of them.

I remember things had calmed down, so I pulled out a couple of magazines, one of which was a Playboy. This probably was not my finest hour of brilliance. All I can remember to this day is the Princess getting up on her seat, looking over to me, and asking, "What are you reading, Mr. Williams?" [laughter] I showed her the Playboy and she said, "Oh, can I see it?" Now what do you do? What do you say, "No, Ma'am, you can't"? I gave her the Playboy and next thing I know she is holding the centerfold up in the airplane. I was absolutely mortified. That was all I could take. I finally stood up and said, "Ma'am,

please give me the magazine back.” I could just see somebody on the plane taking a picture of her holding a Playboy with the playmate of the month being displayed by the princess of Japan.

*Q: Of course you only read it for the interviews.*

WILLIAMS: Of course, only the spoken word, never the pictures! [laughter] The other event that I remember from that trip was that it was really a fun trip and to some degree all the agents got to be tourists as well. The Japanese were not, of course, really known to anybody. I needed to go down the mountain to coordinate something. We had the Colorado state police with us. By the way, I should mention when we do a protective detail, we almost always enlist the assistance of whatever the uniform police agency is that has local jurisdiction. We were bouncing around the state. It doesn't make sense to use local or municipal police, so we used Colorado State Police, because they can arrest for anything anywhere. They were very, very good.

*Q: It must be exciting for them, too.*

WILLIAMS: They love it! Oh, my God, they love it! In the end they're like whores. They line up to have their pictures taken, to get souvenirs signed. It's almost embarrassing. I don't know how many times I found myself on a tarmac taking pictures of uniformed police officers surrounding the protectees with their arms around the prince and the princess or somebody else. It's just the way they are, as they don't get these opportunities very often. Their 15 minutes of fame, so to speak.

I remember I was on top of a mountain. We had some sort of lodge, and for one reason or another I had to leave the detail and go back down to the bottom to the lodge. I think I had to make a phone call back to Washington or I had to see something that was being held at the command post. I had the shift leader assume the agent-in-charge position, and then everybody kind of swaps around. Somebody else acts the shift leader. This is not unusual, and everybody just adjusts.

I remember going over to the Colorado state police and saying, “Look, I need a ride back down to the bottom of the mountain. Can I get one of you guys to take me?” “Yeah, sure.” Big mistake. The Colorado State Policeman, my driver, went down this mountain at 90 miles an hour, lights and siren going, and he's got like one hand on the steering wheel and the other on the seat towards me saying, “Well, you guys do this stuff often?” I'm wanting to crap in my pants thinking, “Oh, yeah, man, sure. We do little trips like this down a mountain. Don't mind me at all.” I'm screaming inside thinking, “What the hell do you think you're doing? Slow down!” No, no, no. In this macho world you can't say that, so you suck it up and keep praying. “Yeah, can you go any faster?” He absolutely scared the hell out of me...absolutely scared the hell out of me. Those were the most vivid memories of that trip: back down the mountain and the princess holding the Playboy in the plane.

*Q: This would have been about the middle of 1984, when you finished up at dignitary protection?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. I finished up in the summer of 1985. Those were the old days. I sat in on the senior staff meetings often, because I was representing my boss who retired, and so I became the acting director of the Office of Protection. As the acting director of Protection, I had the DP under me, my own division, and I had the Secretary's Detail under me as well. The third division was Protective Liaison, so there were three components that made up the Office of Protection. I finished up the last six months being the acting director of Protection, and as such I sat in all the senior staff meetings.

Here's how deals were made back then: somewhere in the spring of 1985 probably or perhaps still the winter 1985, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Security – soon to be the Bureau of Diplomatic Security – said, “Well, you go out next summer, so where you want to go, Denny?” I'd already been thinking about this one, because I knew this was going to happen. Sooner or later this was going to happen. I said, “Well, Dave, I want to go to Cairo.” “Yeah, okay.”

### **Cairo, Egypt, Regional Security Officer**

*Q: So you picked Cairo out of all the posts in the world.*

WILLIAMS: I did. There was no formal bid list like there is now. None of that stuff. No, no, no, no. I was getting coffee and saying to the DAS, “Yeah. I'm glad you asked, Dave. I'd like to go to Cairo.” He responded, “OK, I think that's fine. You can go to Cairo. But why Cairo?” And I responded, “it's the biggest Foreign Service post in the world, and I want the challenge.” It was a done deal.

*Q: That's a good reason. Were you also attracted to the Middle East and antiquities, or what?*

WILLIAMS: Uh-huh...all of the above. I liked the idea of learning more about Egyptian history, visiting some of the world's most famous archeological sites and just learning more about this part of the world. I was also not opposed to being the senior Regional Security Officer at the largest embassy in the world. It would likely get me promoted, and I knew it. At this point I was an FS-1, and been an FS-1 since 1981. I was promoted to FS-1 in seven years, which was something of a record. However, I had always been interested in the Middle East, and I had always been interested in Cairo, and I'm sure the most formative moment was watching the James Bond movie that was filmed in Cairo out at the pyramids. [laughter] You remember that.

*Q: I do remember that! Was that before you went to Cairo or after?*

WILLIAMS: I think it was before. It was Roger Moore and some terrible thing, terrible depiction of distances in Cairo.

*Q: I always liked Roger Moore as Bond, but that was back in the days when Bond was funny.*

WILLIAMS: I know. I know...almost cartoonish. What were the great antiquities down in Luxor, right outside of Luxor?

*Q: There was the Temple of Luxor, and there was Karnack, which was at the heart of the movie.*

WILLIAMS: That's right. They drove from Cairo to Karnack, which is totally unrealistic. But, hey, it's a movie. In any event, I did choose to go to Cairo, and it did not disappoint. Parenthetically, I had been to Cairo one or two times before on protective details, so I knew what I was getting into, more or less.

*Q: It must have been a post that had some security threats attached to it as well.*

WILLIAMS: It did. Interesting things would happen.

*Q: They would, but before they happened you must have realized that in the Middle East you were actually in a more security threat-laden environment than you might have been elsewhere.*

WILLIAMS: Actually, I was talking about still back in the United States when interesting things happened. I was the duty officer, the DS duty officer, and on a Sunday I got a phone call from the State Operations Center that said, "You're the DS duty officer?" I said, "Yep." "We think you ought to come down here. We have something you need to see." I remember going down to the Ops Center, and there was this TS level intelligence about some sort of attack that took place outside the embassy in Cairo. A car... I don't remember all the details anymore, but it looked like somebody tried to attack the embassy, and there was a car on fire outside the embassy compound. It was a big deal. I realized there were things going on in the Middle East. It was not clear as to exactly what happened. I thought, "This is my kind of place,"...intrigue and action. I had been to Cairo. I had gone there on a TDY and I think I mentioned, maybe I mentioned, I don't know, one of my early jobs as a junior agent from '74 to '76 was to be a courier for Kissinger. Did I tell you this?

*Q: You told me about a lot of travel with the deputy secretary, but I don't remember Kissinger in Cairo in particular.*

WILLIAMS: Okay. I had been...

*Q: Kissinger in China, I think you mentioned.*

WILLIAMS: Whoever the secretary... I think Kissinger was secretary, but whatever negotiations were going on in the Middle East, I was sent as a courier, a top secret courier, flying first class with the seat next to me filled with maps in a diplomatic pouch.

I was also traveling with the U.S. Ambassador who was returning to Cairo. He was a great guy, but I know longer remember his name.

I'd been out to Cairo. I had to spend several days out there doing nothing, but walking around playing tourist. Then I returned to the U.S. with another diplomatic pouch which I assumed, but did not know, had more marked up maps. Strange things that we did.

*Q: Must have been rough.*

WILLIAMS: It was terrible! Horrible! But I managed to survive. But I kind of liked what I saw. It whetted my appetite to actually come back.

*Q: How did the family feel about moving back out again? You'd been in the States a while at this point.*

WILLIAMS: Terri was ready to go two weeks after we got back, so this was not an issue. I spent the majority of my four years back as chief of dignitary protection, so after three and a half years of being in DP, which as I told you before was a wonderful job, it was time to go and Cairo was open. I knew that if I waited another year or two to go out, Cairo would not be open. I opted to go to Cairo. Terri was good with that. I already talked to her about it and she was excited about it. We prepared for it. We did our homework. We did the FSI culture courses out there. We did the eight weeks of Arabic at FSI and lot of personal reading and preparation.

It wasn't quite the same as we even do today, on line on the Internet at [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov), but we got the post reports, did all those things you do in preparation for moving. I'm trying to think where we were living. We were living in Herndon, so we put the house up for rent. We actually found a guy who we knew who wanted to rent the house. He and his wonderful family rented our house the whole time we were overseas, the whole time we were in Cairo. Never had to worry about our renters.

*Q: I think you were in one of the same classes as Stephanie [Eicher, the interviewer's wife] but do not remember which course. Is that right? I can't remember what it was, but I wasn't in it. I remember that she met you and knew you before we got to Cairo, by virtue of one of these FSI courses. She did not take language, so it must have been one of the others.*

WILLIAMS: My recollection is of taking the week or two week, I think it was two week course, in the history and culture of the Middle East. It was absolutely outstanding. I learned a ton about the Middle East and a lot about Egypt, so I was excited. I think we were all very excited.

*Q: So the summer of 1985 you were off to Cairo.*

WILLIAMS: Yup, off to Cairo. There was no crossover between the former RSO and me. Fred Brandt, who was a very good RSO, had left some time before I got there.

So when I arrived, the deputy RSO, Charlie Bunn, was the acting RSO. Charlie was very good and we worked well together for another year.

*Q: Charlie Bunn. I did know him. I knew him well. Not as well as you, however.*

WILLIAMS: Charlie was my deputy, so when I got there things were still running just fine. There were five or six agents in the office at the time, which is a very large RSO office, at least back then.

*Q: Six agents in Cairo?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Well, five were organic to the office and a sixth agent was site security manager for the new embassy. However, he worked for me as well but was dedicated to the new embassy office building project.

*Q: ... Which was being built at the time.*

WILLIAMS: It was just about to start construction. In those days, the site security manager worked for the regional security officer, whoever the senior officer was at post. That has subsequently changed. Now site security managers work for the Overseas Building Operations site project manager. This guy worked for me, so there were six of us total. It's a big office. It was the biggest office we had in the world, and busy. My God, incredibly busy...incredibly busy! Of course, at that time Cairo was the biggest embassy in the world. You were already there?

*Q: I must have gotten there about the same time as you did in the summer of '85. I don't remember what month or whether it was before or after your arrival.*

WILLIAMS: I don't either. Typically, we probably arrived in August because we would have had to get the kids ready for school and stuff.

*Q: That would be my guess, but I cannot vouch for it.*

WILLIAMS: We arrived in August. We were assigned housing, some lieutenant commander's house behind the Cairo American College. We were right, literally, behind it, but I think you probably remember that residence, do you not?

*Q: I do remember that. But I think you started out in a different residence and had a fire and had to move?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, my God, you're right. I forgot about that. How quickly the mind masks the pain.

*Q: It's a good thing I'm the one interviewing!*

WILLIAMS: It really is! That's right. They assigned us to this residence right on the corner by the train tracks.

*Q: I remember it, because when you moved after the fire, you moved just a few houses down from where we were.*

WILLIAMS: Exactly. That's right. We were first assigned this pretty good size single family dwelling, almost immediately down by the train tracks. That's the thing I remember most, because you couldn't escape those trains. They were pretty regular on their way to Cairo.

*Q: So did you set it on fire to get out?*

WILLIAMS: I did! OK, not really. That winter, it would have probably been in December or January, Charlie and Gina were over and we had dinner and drinks or whatever we were doing. To make a long story short, you may recall in those days the air conditioners were also the heating units. It was cold out. It was cold that night so we had the heating element on to take the chill off, and we had left it on in the living room when we went to bed.

Up until this point things had been pretty calm in Cairo. I was getting used to the new job, to George Sherman [the political counselor], the Ambassador, and others. I can't remember who... Who was the econ minister counselor? Do you recall? He was a character.

*Q: Oh, gosh...*

WILLIAMS: I know. I can picture him.

*Q: You're the one being interviewed here.*

WILLIAMS: I know! [laughter] We can reverse this! I remember attending my first big country team meeting, where we've got serious, serious players. The ambassador at that time was Nicolas Veliotis.

*Q: Yes, Nick Veliotis.*

WILLIAMS: I would see him much later, many years after that, in a social situation, but back then Nick Veliotis was the ambassador. He was a good ambassador. I think my most fond memory of him was that he was a diver, and he kept inviting me to go diving with him at Sharm El-Sheik, because he knew I was a diver. I kept putting him off and never did go with him, which was just foolish as could be on my part, because the government would have paid for my diving! After all, it was the protection of the ambassador.

When the ambassador went out of the city, we would typically assign two agents to go with him, plus he had his own Egyptian police detail, and they were very good. We had trained them, and we continued to train them, and we qualified them. They were very, very good. While learning the post and learning the job, things were fairly calm. It was just a doggone big embassy with lots to learn.

Anyway, back to the fire. As I said, it was like on a Friday or Saturday night, and after the evening was over, Terri and I went upstairs to go to bed. We left the heating unit on in the living room downstairs, because the house was cold, and by morning that heating unit had caught on fire. But when I started downstairs I heard strange sounds coming from the first floor. Didn't really know what it was, so I can remember walking down the stairs and in the glass of the window that was in the staircase, I could see the reflection of flames. If you want to have a heart stopper take place in your life, *that* is a heart stopper.

I remember running upstairs and grabbing a fire extinguisher, coming back down the stairs, leaning down towards the bottom and realizing the whole living room is engulfed in flames. There's nothing I'm going to do with a fire extinguisher. I went back upstairs, picked up the telephone, which fortunately worked, called the embassy operator, told her that my house was on fire, gave her the address, and asked them to notify the fire department, which she did.

The irony of this was that Friday night, literally two days before the fire, we and the kids talked about our fire escape plan from the house, what we would do.

*Q: Wow, what a good security dad!*

WILLIAMS: One of the incredible coincidences, almost a premonition when you look back on it. We had gone upstairs, and we had mapped out our escape routes, how we would get out of the house. There were a couple of ways to do it. We could go out of this window, go to this sub-roof, go to this, and jump down. We went over it. There was an alternate escape route out our window, and there was a trellis, you could literally climb down the trellis. The trellis was quite substantial and would support our weight. I remember we walked through the house with the kids. We talked it and we walked it.

Little did I know that two days later on a Sunday morning we would be confronted with a fire, and all I can remember when I saw it was coming back upstairs and yelling to Terri, "Fire!" We both got Levis on as fast as we could with a shirt of some sort. I remember closing the doorway to the hallway upstairs, because now the smoke was starting to come up the stairs. I closed the door to the hallway, and the building pressure started streaming smoke under the door. I got a towel or something and as best I could clamped it along the bottom of the door. We rounded the kids out of bed, literally in their nightshirts or whatever pajamas they were wearing. At that point in 1985 or early 1986 Chris would have been about 15, and Jeff would have been about around 10. They were both old enough to understand what was going on and what to do about it.

We went to the primary escape route that we planned out and decided it was too close to the living room where the fire was raging, and chose not to use the primary escape route. We went back to our bedroom, closed the door to keep more smoke out. It's funny, the things you think about. I had two weapons in the house. I had my issue weapon, my .357 Magnum revolver, and I had a personal weapon, a PPK/S pistol. I remember gathering up my weapon and putting it into my briefcase. What I was thinking about of all things was firemen safety. I didn't want my weapons and bullets "cooking off," as the phrase goes, and harming or injuring a fireman. I gathered my weapons up, slung my briefcase – it was a briefcase with a shoulder strap – around my shoulder, and then going down the trellis first, got to the bottom, and then the kids came down one at a time, Terri kind of feeding them out so that I could catch them if they were to fall, and then Terri coming down. Somewhere in the middle of all of this, I had the presence of mind to call the embassy operator who called the Egyptian fire department.

Then, I remember Chris screaming, "Where's our cat? Where's our cat?" Before I knew it he climbed back up the trellis and went back into the house, and I'm going, "Oh, no!" and I'm going back up the trellis. Well, we couldn't find the cat. We couldn't find the cat at the time, Kitty, or whatever the cat's name *d'jour* was, we just couldn't find her. Chris came back out.

The fire service arrived, and again all I remember them saying is, "Can we borrow a ladder?"

*Q: But they arrived! That's something for Egypt.*

WILLIAMS: They arrived! They wanted to borrow a ladder and use our garden hose. But indeed, one way or another they put out the fire which had mostly been contained to the living room just by the nature of the living room. We were in far less danger than I really imagined, because you keep forgetting for the most part houses in the Middle East, houses in Europe, were concrete things. They're not this wooden structure. So what was burning in the living room was furniture and furnishings. Yes, they burned. It made for a hell of a mess, but what really did the damage in the house was the smoke. It turned that house black. If we hadn't closed that upstairs door leading to the bedroom hallway, we would have had an even bigger mess.

*Q: Your belongings as well?*

WILLIAMS: Everything that was outside the closed door to the bedroom area was an absolute mess. To this day I can still go down and find soot on something in the basement. Most of our books were upstairs in the library, which was on a landing not unlike our house here. The landing was open to below. It was a little bit of an unusual design for an Egyptian house, but the landing was open to below, so everything downstairs and everything upstairs on the landing were covered in soot. Even closed drawers had been violated by the soot. Everything you could think of in the kitchen: Dishes, pots, pan, silverware, really everything.

*Q: You had received your effects by that time.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes, unfortunately.

*Q: That was a pretty harrowing experience for everybody. The house was damaged beyond moving back into. That's when you moved to the nicer neighborhood down by us!*

WILLIAMS: A much nicer neighborhood but a much smaller house.

*Q: But quite a reasonable one as I remember.*

WILLIAMS: It was okay.

*Q: Just right across the street from the Cairo American College, the local American high school.*

WILLIAMS: It was. By that point, we were desperate for a house. Nick Baskey, God love him, as you may recall, was the Admin Minister-Counselor and officially my boss. I should rewind the story just for a moment. Nick was a great guy, and I loved him dearly, and to this day we've stayed in touch. Right after I got to post we had a terribly unusual situation.

Let me just finish the house fire story frankly. Lots and lots of people came over that day once the fire was out. By the way, I remember one of the firemen, when the fire was out, walking over to me, then he pulls out a cigarette and says, "Do you have a match?" All I could remember saying was, "Hell no, I don't have a match. Hell no. Go in and light it off the upholstery." I mean, you friggin' idiot. Get out of my way. Do you have a match! I had nothing! I had a briefcase filled with guns and the clothes I was wearing.

*Q: The irony of it all.*

WILLIAMS: The irony of it all. But lots of people showed up to help. Lots and lots of people showed up. By the end of that day we were moved into an apartment in the OBO 11-11 building.

*Q: ...Which was an embassy compound.*

WILLIAMS: ...Which was an embassy apartment compound several blocks away. We moved into 11-11; all our stuff was put into storage someplace. Most of our clothes were fine, because of what we did upstairs in closing those doors. So clothes, personal effects, toiletries, things of that nature were fine, but we had dozens of people helping us move those things that could be moved right away out of the house. The house was a mess. I mean those things that couldn't be moved right away, like furniture and furnishings that were not damaged by fire but were smoke damaged, would take us weeks to go through and clean. Many people helped. The embassy community is one of those unique things. It is a community, and they did help us do move, and by that evening we were in OBO

building 11-11, except for all the stuff in the house. We locked up the front door of the house and left it the way it was, terribly damaged. I posted a guard on the house, and then it just took us weeks and weeks to clean that stuff piece by piece and store it until whenever.

When I arrived at post I had this hotshot admin consular called Nick Baskey, an FE-OC, very young for the senior Foreign Service, who made, I think, his FE-MC that fall. Nick had gotten into serious trouble with DS in Turkey. He had used end-of-the-year funds, not appropriated for this reason, to build some sort of warehouse or something. He told me the story. There was no personal gain involved, but he used funds that were not designated for this purpose. He was an innovator. He had a lot of initiative, he could be extremely creative, and so he built this warehouse or whatever he did in Turkey. I don't know the details. DS was sent to investigate, and he was reprimanded strongly, docked many, many days' pay, his file annotated...blah. blah, blah, and on and on and on and on. He told me the story. First day I met him he told me the whole story. Somebody who had this kind of experience can go one of two ways: they can either hate DS forever, and take it out on everybody and anybody they come in contact with who has a DS affiliation, or they can take it to heart and move on. Nick did the latter and we became good friends, SCUBA diving buddies. In fact, we still stay in touch.

**[End Tape 4, side a]**

*Q: This is side 4b. It's still September 2, 2007, and you're telling the Nick Baskey story.*

WILLIAMS: In any event, as I started to say, he was reprimanded by the director general based on a DS investigation that he inappropriately used State Department funds, so it wasn't a personal gain. But he was reprimanded. He was penalized several thousand dollars and several days on the beach. He told me the story, and then what he said to me was amazing. He really didn't hold any animosity toward DS. In fact, what he said directly to me was essentially this: "You run your own operation." He said, "I don't want to be involved in DS decision making. I don't want to get myself in trouble." He said, "The only thing I ask of you is if you know that the embassy's going to be blown up, would you please come and tell me?" This is not hyperbole, this is essentially what he said. He was good to his word; he never interfered nor did he try to control security operations. He counted on me to take care of business and just keep him informed.

He was my official supervisor, and he was a great boss. He was a terrific boss. In fact I tended to work almost directly for the DCM.

*Q: DCM ? When you got there, at that time, was the DCM Bill Clark?*

WILLIAMS: It was Bill Clark. He was an absolutely wonderful DCM who believed the RSO office was his fiefdom and not the Admin Counselor's. Nick would receive his FE-MC that fall. He'd be the youngest minister-counselor that I knew, and he continued to be a terrific admin counselor with an awful, miserable job where it was too hard to get the simplest things done. But you know that, Peter. I don't have to tell you.

*Q: In many countries it's that way.*

WILLIAMS: It is.

*Q: What was the main thrust of your job in Cairo? What were you focused on?*

WILLIAMS: I was focusing on several things. Terrorism was not an unknown word. And, having known that somebody had tried to attack the embassy, or so it appeared, just months earlier when I was still back in the U.S., my first and foremost duty was to ensure that the embassy itself was secure. I made sure we had Marines where we needed Marines, and that we had local guards where we needed them. I made sure all agents had individual assignments, that is, that they knew what they were going to be doing. Mostly, I made sure the physical and technical security of the embassy, given the risks, were what they needed to be. And, finally, I made sure the ambassador had proper protection. Protecting the mission – the staff and facilities – is an RSO's prime directive.

Let me explain what I mean by that. Typically, I would assign the agents under me portfolios. One agent might have the Marines, one agent might have the local guards, one agent would have investigations, and one agent might have residential security. People carried more than one portfolio. Then they would each have subsets. There would be a secondary agent who had investigations as well.

Our thrust initially was to get this huge, massive program, everything from security violations to incredible numbers of investigations, both criminal and non-criminal background investigations, to make sure that those were up and running, to ensure that we had a residential security program, that we were inspecting people's housing. We did. We looked at everybody's house. They were not allowed to take a house, as I learned by experience in Cairo, unless we inspected it and approved it, with whatever modifications were required, such as grills or whatever is needed. Obviously, Cairo is a lot safer place than Kingston, Jamaica, but there was still some petty crime.

Mostly, it was normalizing American operations in the office, and there was a lot of playing "getting to know you." A lot of what a senior RSO does in a place like Cairo is to establish his political ties. That's, by the way, far more important than you may think. I had natural allies in the defense attaché. But I had some run-ins with the defense attaché right away.

*Q: You're talking about political ties within the embassy.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, that is correct.

*Q: Presumably also with the Egyptian police and security people...*

WILLIAMS: Yes, with the Egyptian police, although that was a little bit unique. We were not allowed to run around as I could in Jamaica where I could go to any level of police. I could go to the deputy commissioner, who I think I told you served me scotch at

noon, to and of the police superintendents who were responsible for our areas. There were no restrictions put on me in Kingston or on what we could do or who we could see, but that's not quite the case in Cairo.

We had to deal officially with state security, and we had a colonel and lieutenant colonel who were our official liaison officers, but I had others. In that same orbit there were some generals that I would see periodically. I got to know the general in charge of Egyptian military intelligence – his name was Abdul Rahman. Great, smart guy. He had the same name as a terrorist in the years ahead, but anyway.... You get to know a whole variety of police, but I was pretty limited in where I could go and what I could do in Cairo. State security was our official channel, and I had, as I said, a colonel and lieutenant colonel that I dealt with all the time.

The colonel was somewhat of a slime ball. Let's retract that, because he might read this! [laughter] He was politically adept and smooth, maybe a little too much so. Nevertheless, they were generally always helpful and would come to me for favors as well. It was a mutually symbiotic relationship that worked.

Both the people I dealt with spoke English fluently, but this is the way state security operated. They assigned a state security officer to be official liaison to every one of the embassies. Then I established a lunch group of my other embassy security colleagues—the Brits, the Australians, the Canadians, the Japanese, and the Italians—and we would meet once a month, once a quarter or something for lunch. We would exchange information.

Probably the biggest thing that was going on outside of prying eyes was the establishing of direct relations with the Israelis. I was really the only one who had ongoing and direct contact with the Israelis, and as it turned out, I didn't realize this right away, it would turn out that I would be the official conduit to the Israeli embassy for things the ambassador wanted to pass as well. He would not go to the Israeli embassy, and he generally would not attend functions at the Israeli embassy. Neither did I for that matter, but I maintained a close working relationship with the chief of security of the Israeli Embassy.

*Q: Did you really? My portfolio in the political section included the Egypt-Israel relationship. That was a little different I suppose.*

WILLIAMS: It was.

*Q: I spent a lot of time with the Israeli embassy staff as a result of that.*

WILLIAMS: Well, for the same reason the ambassador didn't go, couldn't go, neither did I. I spent a lot of time with Israeli security people on my rooftop. A *lot* of time.

*Q: On your rooftop?*

WILLIAMS: On my rooftop, because I couldn't trust my house.

*Q: Ah, okay.*

WILLIAMS: If you understand what I mean.

*Q: I understand what you mean, yes.*

WILLIAMS: I couldn't trust that the whole house did not have listening devices in it. I had no way of ensuring that it did or did not. We had a Filipino maid who could easily have been co-opted, understandably, by Egyptian security. She was dependent on an Egyptian visa to stay in the country and work in the country. So we always met on my rooftop, because we were reasonably certain that was probably clean and clear of listening devices.

That's how we passed information back and forth in Cairo between us and the Israelis. The ambassador would call me up and say, "Denny, I got a package I'd like you to give to the Israelis. On my monitored trunk lines in the embassy I would call the Israeli embassy and say, "Hey, this is Denny. How you doing? Things going well?" "Yeah, I just want to make sure, just want to touch base with you. Take care." That was it. He'd be over that night. We had some code word, I can't even remember what it was. I think I asked him about his wife, or something, it didn't matter, and he was over. His car had non-diplomatic plates, and he spoke fluent English, so when he showed up he spoke English to the guards, because I did eventually have local guards, but not right away. Initially he could show up and go up to the roof, and that's when we talked and exchanged information.

A couple of things happened right off the bat though. I was there only two weeks when the deputy, admin counselor, Hal Dabbler, God rest his soul, he passed away recently, called me up to his office. We were doing an investigation on a lady who was running a side business and using the APO as a way of bringing in merchandise. I knew something was wrong in the mail room. The APO people had alerted me. They thought something was really wrong, that all of this stuff kept coming in for her. I think you probably know you can't run businesses via the APO or FPO.

We opened an investigation to see what the hell was going on. I remember Hal Dabbler calling me up to his office, and I had been there two weeks. I'm not kidding you. Two weeks. "Sit down." He was very curt, and he said, "Are you running an investigation on this lady?" and I said, "Maybe I am, maybe I'm not. What's the point?" He said, "I want you to stop it, and I want you to stop it right now."

*Q: My goodness.*

WILLIAMS: I said, "Well, Hal." You sit there and think of your options for a moment. I said, "Well Hal," and I didn't work for him. I worked for the admin counselor. I said, "There are two ways we can go with this, Hal. You can either become part of the problem or part of the solution, but if you want, I will make you part of the problem. If you want

to be interfering with a federal officer in a federal investigation, be my guest, and I'll make you a co-conspirator. Now what do you want to do, Hal? You better not stop an investigation. I don't take orders from you, and you're interfering. It's violation of Title 18 of the U.S. code." He didn't know what to do with that piece of information. That kind of shocked him that anybody would say that to him, but basically I stood up and said, "This discussion is over. I don't really have anything else to say to you," and I never heard another word from Hal Dabblers on anything.

As it would turn out in the coming months, all of us would become good friends, including Hal. Hal had a lapse of judgment for that moment, but he was a very, very good guy. I think he thought he was doing the right thing, but he really wasn't doing the right thing in this case. As it would turn out, she would simply stop her business and all these packages just stopped coming. At that point I just let it drop, because then it was no longer an issue and it was kind of after the fact, at that point. Whatever she was doing she stopped. I am certain Hal said something to her but I suspect he really did not know what was going on. I suspect he was getting used a bit.

The other thing within the first few weeks of my time there, was that I would meet the political counselor.

*Q: Yeah? I remember him well.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. George Sherman. So I probably won't tell any George Sherman stories on this tape.

*Q: This may not be the place for that.*

WILLIAMS: George and I would have to come to an understanding of his role and my role, and that my role was not subservient to his role. Once we came to that understanding, he was fine. However, he just couldn't stop getting security violations. That was George's biggest problem there. His office just was a magnet for violations.

*Q: I suppose you had a lot of those at Embassy Cairo with an embassy that size. It's kind of inevitable.*

WILLIAMS: Hundreds of them! The fact is that it was completely out of control. One of the things that I had always done regardless of where it was, is that I took the violation program fairly seriously. You will recall agents' portfolios. One of the portfolios you had if you were the duty agent – and there was a different duty agent each week, each of us took turns – if you were the duty agent and there were violations – and there always were – it was your job to investigate the violation and determine whether or not it was valid. We never, ever voided violations, ever, because of friendship or somebody asking or whatever. In order for the program to have any integrity at all, everybody has to be treated equally, including RSOs, I might add. If an RSO got a violation, he or she got a violation. There were no exceptions, unless the violation was obviously just wrong or a mistake.

*Q: That follows what you described as your principles at previous posts.*

WILLIAMS: You know, the Marines would catch me in Cairo, and I would owe some Marine a bottle of wine. And, yes, I got it for him.

*Q: This must be a big Marine detachment, too.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, it was. At some point it was pretty close to 20; it was a big detachment! We had a lot of Marine posts to staff.

*Q: The embassy there was scattered in several different buildings.*

WILLIAMS: It was. Well, yes and no. You'll recall the USAID mission was a few blocks away, in its own building.

*Q: And USIA was down the street a little bit?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, it was down the street. They had their own facilities, their own buildings.

*Q: Even in the compound there were two or three buildings.*

WILLIAMS: There were three buildings within the compound, plus the cultural center and the library, the USAID mission, and we had the GSO. There was also Navy Medical Research Unit 6, in Ma'adi, or NAMRU 6, which I really do not remember dealing with very often. One of our immediate challenges was to get the local guard program unscrewed and get the right number of local guards at each location, and to make sure we had Marines where we needed the Marines. There was a lot of adjusting some of those resources during those days, and it took a while. I mean, it was such a huge, huge program. I required the RSO who had the local guard portfolio to come in the middle of the night and go to each of those locations, to ensure guards were on duty and at their stations.

*Q: Was the purpose of the checks to ensure the guards were doing their jobs?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. To make sure they were doing their jobs, as simple as that. Shortly before we had gotten to Cairo, actually just a few months before we had gotten there, Cairo had a terrible event take place. A Marine Security Guard had come down in the middle of the night and found the local guard out in the Compound Access Center, where people came into the compound, asleep. The Marine shot him and killed him.

*Q: Oh, my.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah, because he was asleep. It was a nightmare scenario. That Marine was literally spirited from the country the next morning, before it was made public that a

U.S. Marine had killed an Egyptian national. He was, of course, charged with murder back in the United States and was court-martialed for the murder. I'm sure, maybe to this day, he might still be spending time in Ft. Leavenworth. But I suspect not, he probably got 10, 15 or 20 years of imprisonment. The Marine Corps had to take this stuff very seriously. I had to kind of make sure that this was not going to happen again. We had to tighten up on the whole local guard program. It was too big, too was unwieldy and completely out of out of control. I was never entirely sure we weren't paying guards we didn't even have, truthfully. I'm serious – this is a serious problem for all DS local guard programs. We did the best we could, and certainly made it way better than it was.

*Q: You must have had hundreds of them, hundreds.*

WILLIAMS: About 300 local guards. I assigned an agent. His sole responsibility was to ensure that they were doing their job.

The other thing that really hadn't been done very well, because my predecessor had been a security engineering officer, was that the Marine Security Detachment had not really been exercised.

*Q: By exercised you mean PT or something like...*

WILLIAMS: No, no, I mean run on drills. We didn't have alert conditions, they had not been established for the Marine Security Guard Detachment. Right away, I established alert conditions one through four.

Here's what an alert condition is: An alert condition takes you from normal operations to a step up, and that brings more Marines into play for every step up in the alert conditions. Alert conditions four, three, two to one. One is the highest and it usually means you've been attacked or something of similar gravity.

Then we also set up conditions so a post could announce a situation like condition white, yellow, and red. If a marine hit on his radio system: "This is Marine Post 2, I have alert condition yellow," then he had a problem. He has a serious problem right then. He didn't have to say anything else other than, "This is Post 2, and I am at condition yellow, condition yellow," and that would cause automatic reaction of things. Condition red meant there was violence. Someone had been shot, stabbed, some sort of violence or attack. Something was taking place at that post. Mostly this had to do with the perimeter posts where we had Marines. We had Marine posts at the CAC, the Compound Access Center, and you recall that you went through those doors in the morning, if you didn't drive onto the compound. We had a Marine post in the consular section, when it was still where it was. We had a Marine post in the AID building, and then we had two rovers and a Marine post in the chancery. So, during the day we had six marines on duty simultaneously. That's a lot of Marines, plus the Detachment Commander and Assistant Detachment Commander. You can stop it for a second, Peter.

**[Pause in the tape.]**

*Q: Okay, we're back.*

WILLIAMS: We're on Marines. We began exercising, and we began holding drills. Drills, there are really two different sets of drills that you do. One is an intruder drill, that somebody's gotten in, has made his or their way into the compound somehow and they've gotten into a building, and we've got to find him. It's a room by room search. It's quite elaborate. It's very prescribed as to how this is done, so we did a lot of intruder drills.

You also kind of have to do drills which are not repel-the-attackers kind of things, but rather how you shut down and lock down the place. This is a defensive mode. There are also scenarios where you position the Marines if the embassy is under attack from terrorists or a crowd turns violent and decides they want to break into the embassy. Where do we take people? Where do we have them shelter in place? Those kinds of things had not been done.

I remember standing up on the roof with that Detachment Commander at the time, and he wasn't going to be there too terribly long. I think he would leave by the end of the following summer, and I realized a lot of things had been allowed to get a little bit out of control all the way around. It's in part because the prior RSO just didn't know better. I asked the Detachment Commander how he would handle snipers in the surrounding buildings, and he informed me that he would never shoot off-embassy, which I thought was a strange answer from a military guy committed to protecting the embassy and its staff.

*Q: Shoot off-embassy? Outside the embassy?*

WILLIAMS: Right. If there were a sniper in a building up there that was shooting down at us, would you shoot up at him? The answer is, "Oh course you'd shoot up at him! Don't be silly. If somebody's trying to kill your people, if you have to do suppression fire or try to shoot him yourself, of course you've have to return fire, if only to buy time for everyone to seek cover. Why would you wait for him to shoot somebody to find out if he were real? He told me he would not shoot off the compound, and I told him I would relieve him if I ever gave that order and he refused to carry it out. So there was a "Come to Jesus" moment with him right then and there. I never bluff. I would have relieved him in a second if he had refused to follow one of my orders. He decided that maybe he didn't want to play that game. We never had that discussion again and he was an excellent Detachment Commander.

Then several things happened. I forgot all the things that did happen that first year.

*Q: The Achille Lauro. I was going to ask about that earlier. It was rather a turbulent time, because not only the Achille Lauro, but I think in the first year wasn't there a U.S. bombing of Libya or of Tunis or something?*

WILLIAMS: Yes.

*Q: Or both?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, there was that, and then there were the riots, the police riots! That was all in the first year!

*Q: Really? Weren't the riots in the second year?*

WILLIAMS: No, I don't think so, because when the riots occurred we living in the FBO 11-11 apartment building, given the fire we had in our first house.

*Q: The riots were in the first year?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, I am pretty sure but not 100% positive – a bit too long ago. There was the *Achille Lauro* in September. My mistake, and I made a huge tactical and strategic blunder at the time. I didn't appreciate the seriousness of the situation at the time, and perhaps because I didn't understand all the facts of the situation.

*Q: You're talking about the Achille Lauro?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, I am talking about the *Achille Lauro*. It came back and docked in Alexandria.

*Q: Just to make sure that we're clear here on the tape, the Achille Lauro was...*

WILLIAMS: ...a cruise ship that was out on the Mediterranean when an American in a wheelchair, I don't remember his name...

*Q: Leon Klinghoffer.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, thank you. Leon Klinghoffer, a Jewish gentleman was, I believe, shot and pushed overboard by terrorists who seized the ship. Do you recall?

*Q: Yes.*

WILLIAMS: But I don't remember this all that well. This was probably my first or second week.

*Q: Thinking back, it was slightly later, because I believe I was duty officer at the time. I arrived in Cairo about the same time as you, and I would not have been put on duty...*

WILLIAMS: Is that right?

*Q: ...quite that soon after arriving. I remember being down in the ambassador's staff aide's office as we were trying to get news in and communicating back and forth with the*

*Ops Center, and there were actually two things going on, if I remember correctly. One was the Achille Lauro, and the other was the World Series! That would probably peg it for October. [Editor's note: the Achille Lauro incident took place in early October 1985.]*

WILLIAMS: It probably would peg it for October. Regardless, it occurred within my first few weeks at post. All I remember thinking, you know, is first I've got a Marine Detachment Commander who says, "No, I don't shoot," then I've got a political counselor who's beating on me, then I've got a deputy admin officer who wants me to stop investigations, a guard force that's in chaos, Marines that haven't been exercised for years, and I am thinking somewhere in my mind, "Oh, my God, what have I gotten myself into?"

But I'll tell you what. We had a good country team. That made a lot of it easier. I had established relationships with the defense attaché and with the CIA station chief. Those are your natural allies, at least for an RSO at post. There were no other law enforcement agencies stationed in Cairo, which I always thought was strange given the fact Cairo was, at the time, the largest US Embassy in the world.

*Q: There was a NARC there. I know, because I had the State Department NARC portfolio among my duties, and there was in fact a DEA person I worked with.*

WILLIAMS: I honestly do not remember a DEA agent or agents being in Cairo. To the best of my recollection, DS was the only law enforcement presence, that is, federal agents, in Cairo, which was strange given the size of the post. USAID had an Inspector General guy posted in Cairo. He was great guy.

*Q: Given the size of their mission, it makes sense.*

WILLIAMS: Al Hazen. Remember Al?

*Q: Of course I do!*

WILLIAMS: Al Hazen lived out of our office. He might as well have moved his office down to our office, because whenever he was doing an investigation, and it got deadly serious due to criminal malfeasance or whatever, he had to come down and take a couple of my agents with him, because we could carry guns, and he couldn't carry a gun. He was with us constantly. If there were a DEA agent at post, he or she was a non-entity to us. Which is strange, because in Kingston, Jamaica, we had a DEA agent and we were always helping each other with thing or another. But for some reason, I just do not remember a DEA agent at post at all.

*Q: I remember partly because we even had the assistant secretary for counter-narcotics come out at one point, and I worked together with him to set up a schedule and take him around.*

WILLIAMS: International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, INL?

*Q: Yes...in any event...back to the Achille Lauro.*

WILLIAMS: *Achille Lauro*. The *Achille Lauro* took place, as I said, just weeks into my tour. I had no appreciation for the magnitude of what was going on. However, because it was a criminal event, I sent an agent up to Alexandria, and I remember Edmund Hull went on behalf of the political section, as I recall. That was a huge mistake on my part. First of all, I sent a junior agent; I should have gone myself. I think if I had truly understood the magnitude of the issue, which I did not, I would have responded entirely differently. I didn't realize that Leon Klinghoffer had been thrown overboard or that this was an early case of international terrorism. I knew something bad had happened, but I didn't know exactly what it was. A lot of the investigative details that the U.S. government would have liked to have had were lost, because Edmund went up and took charge and I just had not appreciated the importance of the event.

*Q: Did the Achille Lauro pull into Alexandria?*

WILLIAMS: Yes.

*Q: Okay, that was the connection with Embassy Cairo. I knew there was a connection, but I don't remember that. I must have been off duty by that time.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, and we didn't do a very good job investigating the facts and circumstances that surrounded what had happened and, again, it was my fault. I shouldn't have sent one person, that was my first mistake, and I shouldn't have sent a junior person. That was my second mistake.

*Q: This presumed somebody got control of the ship back again.*

WILLIAMS: Somebody did. I don't remember any more how that happened. I don't recall.

*Q: I remember a big crisis at the time, but I don't quite remember how it ended.*

WILLIAMS: I don't either. You know, Egypt had a hostage rescue team. I don't know if you remember that.

*Q: No, but okay. No reason why I would have known.*

WILLIAMS: They had a pretty effective hostage rescue team that had actually been sponsored by the U.S. government. We equipped it and trained it. It certainly wasn't DS that was doing this. It was another government agency, but it was pretty big time, and it was made known to me pretty early on that this was what was happening. I met the commanders of the hostage rescue team, got to know all of them. They did not... My

recollection is they did not have anything to do with taking back the *Achille Lauro*. I just don't remember. The *Achille Lauro* was an Italian ship.

*Q: I think that's right.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, so I'm not sure how it was taken back, although I just remember it ended up in Alexandria. It was not a good scene, as you well know.

*Q: It turned out to be not only a big political issue, but one that started to affect tourism to Egypt and the rest of the Middle East and started to generally raise a crisis atmosphere in that part of the world at the time.*

WILLIAMS: ...understandable, because as we continued, things just started to deteriorate in the Middle East.

As you may recall, the United States government in Cairo had really incredible capabilities, informational capabilities, within the Egyptian government. There was a lot we knew was going on, from an overt, not covert standpoint, capabilities that we had a pretty good handle on. Like I said, I was privy. As the senior RSO, I was the only RSO, given full access to all the various US Government capabilities. It's interesting, and I of course had to keep it from my colleagues – that old “need to know” stuff. I think my deputy, Charlie Bunn, always had somewhat greater access to specialized information, simply because I couldn't be there all the time.

We had excellent working relations with the CIA station and a lot of information came to us via the CIA. Everybody knows the CIA and DS work very closely together, and at that time in Cairo, there was a lot going on. We saw reporting for Egypt and for regional activities the CIA thought we should know. Most all of this I would share with my cleared American RSO team. You could see things were starting to “heat up,” if you will, throughout the Middle East, and Egypt was no exception. When you go back in history, back to the 1930s, the Muslim Brotherhood has been around, not to mention all the other organizations, and doing a fine job I might add, supporting society in Egypt.

*Q: In addition to the Achille Lauro, two or three other significant security events took place.*

WILLIAMS: We'll take them in order.

*Q: If you remember what the order was, because I'm not sure I do.*

WILLIAMS: The first thing that happened even before my house burned down, was that a Marine Security Guard, the assistant detachment commander, deserted. He took a handgun.

*Q: A Marine we're talking about?*

WILLIAMS: A Marine...a staff sergeant. He took a handgun and several boxes of ammunition and went AWOL. He took off into the city and melted away into the masses. I mean, he flipped out.

*Q: Was he an Egyptian-American or something to blend in with society?*

WILLIAMS: No! No! Quite Caucasian. He deserted his post and went AWOL. Well, this is a huge problem. He's got a gun, he's got multiple boxes of ammunition, and so I sent *all* of my local investigators and some of my plain clothes local guard staff into the city going from place to place looking for this guy. And we found him in Tahrir Square or someplace near there – in other words, not far from the embassy. We found him. I wasn't there to seize him, but others were there. I think the locals plus the Marine detachment commander, plus two or three Marines showed up wherever he was and literally grabbed him. I mean, he had the gun and the ammunition in a backpack. They grabbed him and brought him in, and placed him under house arrest.

*Q: Had he gone nuts or something?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, pretty much. He was mentally unstable. They placed him under house arrest. They confined him to the Marine House. Two Marines were assigned to guard him. He was stripped of his assistant detachment commander status. He was a Marine, and was under Marine House arrest waiting for transport back to the United States and probably a court martial. I remember these Marines followed him around the house and sure as hell, he went into the bathroom, and they waited outside the bathroom. You've seen the story on TV; he climbed out the friggin' window and disappeared leaving his two detention guards in the house standing outside the bathroom. He was gone again. I couldn't believe it!

After reading the detachment commander the riot act, I then put out word to the American community that I had to find this guy. He couldn't survive without American community support, and I knew this. No kidding. After two days I got a phone call from someone in the American community who said, "He's made contact with me. He's coming over to my house tonight. He'll be over here at 7:30. He thinks he's having dinner. He knows he's on the run. He knows he's hiding out. I know you need to get him. Would you please just not make it look obvious that I turned him in? I know you have to come here and get him."

About 8:00 or 8:30 I showed up with four agents. No more Marines. We knocked on the door, our informant opened the door and basically we just pushed the door open, pushed him out of the way, and went for our wayward Marine. You don't have any rights overseas, you know. This is Egypt for God's sake. He jumped up from behind the table. Two agents seized him and literally put him down on his knees, put him on the floor in handcuffs, got him up, and walked him out of the house, put him in our cars. Now...no more Marines. There are no Marines in this story. We took him down to the embassy, and this time I put him in the detachment commander's office in handcuffs. He's handcuffed. He cannot go anywhere. My order to the detachment commander was, "If he goes in for

an ablution, you will have a Marine, two Marines, standing outside that stall. You may remove the handcuffs for that, but no more; he gets to go into a bathroom by himself. They're in there with him every minute of the day." I said, "If he escapes, you're gone."

That was a great motivator! That would have been a career ender, and he knew it, and I wasn't kidding. The wayward Marine was eventually put on a plane in handcuffs and flown back to the United States. I have no idea what happened to him.

*Q: Put him on a commercial flight or military flight?*

WILLIAMS: Commercial flight. We did the arrangements with TWA. You may recall we had American carriers there, so we made arrangements with TWA. We had a special working relationship with TWA.

*Q: Presumably you had to work with Egyptian security to some extent as well.*

WILLIAMS: Not really.

*Q: You can carry a guy in handcuffs through the airport without anybody...?*

WILLIAMS: Remember, with diplomatic immunity you can do anything you want, although that's a bit of hyperbole. We had diplomatic immunity and so did the Marines. I am certain I would have worked this with Egyptian State Security. The security director for TWA in Cairo was an agent groupie. He was down with us all the time for one reason or another. He did us incredible favors, and then we helped him however we could.

*Q: TWA sort of dates us, doesn't it?*

WILLIAMS: It does! Teeny Weenie Airlines – actually, before we were married Terri flew for TWA. Anyway, we did the TWA Cairo security director incredible favors as well. If he wanted to bring friends to the Marine House on Friday night, it wasn't a problem. And he *loved* having those kinds of privileges, so it was a mutually supportive situation.

Anyway, we go the errant Marine on an airplane and out of town, but it was like, "Oh, my God. What more can go wrong here?"

Well, more could go wrong. First our house burned down, and I tell that story because the second part is we moved into the apartment complex known as FBO 11-11, a big, big two story apartment complex in Cairo. The good news is it's a big American apartment complex with parking underneath, nice American apartments. The bad news is that it's right on the street if anybody ever wanted to blow us up, which at the time was not probable. We are right there on the street, but that was before the days we considered that to be a problem. Fortunately, that never happened...fortunately.

We moved in there and I remember Terri and I debating whether we should just become comfortable and stay there. It had the safety and security of an American complex that was guarded 24 hours a day, had its own generator so when the power went out, which it frequently did, we had power. In any event, while we were there in the middle of the night I got a phone call from the two-star general who was in charge military advisory group, or something similar. Well, I got several phone calls. I can't remember if that is where I got the phone call about us bombing Libya. That does not make for a good start of your day.

Somewhere in there I got the phone call that we're bombing Libya to try to kill Gaddafi. It's four o'clock in the morning. The phone rings. It's the DS command center saying, "We want to let you know that the United States is now bombing Libya." "I'm sorry. Who's this again?" [laughter] "This is the DS command center. We want you to know that U.S. bombers are bombing Libya." I think, "Oh, crap. This is not going to be a good day."

*Q: This was 1984 or '85? Probably '85, end of '85? [Editor's note: the U.S. bombing of Libya took place on April 15, 1986.]*

WILLIAMS: Probably the end of 1985 or early in 1986. We were not there in 1984.

*Q: Ronald Reagan. What had the Libyans done? Was this retaliation for Lockerbie?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. They were trying to kill Gaddafi. I called all the DS agents at home right then and there and said, "I want you all in the embassy in an hour." By five o'clock or five thirty everybody was there not having a clue what's going on. I told them what was going on, had the Marine detachment commander there, and while we expected the worst, nothing actually happened.

*Q: The Egyptians weren't in such good relationship with Libya at the time either, I guess.*

WILLIAMS: That's right.

*Q: it certainly heightened tensions further in the Middle East.*

WILLIAMS: For sure, tensions were heighten even further. But later, when I was still in the FBO 11-11 apartment, because I hadn't moved to the new house over by you, that phone call would come from that two-star general, but his name is evading me.

*Q: I do not remember his name either.*

WILLIAMS: Very, very, very good guy. We had a great working relationship. Somewhere in there he called me about four o'clock, five o'clock in the morning and he said, "You won't believe this, but I think there's rioting out by the pyramids." He said, "You know, I've got some people staying out there at the Holiday Inn, out by the pyramids, and I'm kind of worried about their safety. Can you send some people out

there to see if you can extricate them?” It was kind of like, what? What are you talking about, Tom, Dave, whatever his name was! He said, “No, really! I’m getting reports from our people that we have out there TDY that there’s rioting taking place out by the pyramids and that they’re burning things.” I’m thinking: “Nah, this can’t be.” I actually called two of my local investigators at home, had them go down and get a car and said, “Your job is to go out to the Holiday Inn or whatever hotel it was and find these two or three people and get them in the car and get them out of there.” I really didn’t know what’s going on.

Well, that didn’t work well. That didn’t work well at all. By five o’clock I’m getting a phone call back saying, “Hey, there really is rioting going on out at the pyramids, and this is no joke. And by the way, the Holiday Inn is on fire.” “What???” I had no idea. Like everybody else, I had no idea what’s going on. Then there was a radio call back to the Marines from the local investigators that said, “We’re taking rounds through the car here! We’re getting shot at! And we’re turning back!” “What?” I’m completely in the dark as to what’s going on. I told the Marine Security Guard on Post One of the embassy: I want you to call all the RSOs at home and tell them I want them in the embassy by six o’clock, no later than six o’clock. Second, go to MSG Alert Condition three.” Okay.

*Q: Whatever that means.*

WILLIAMS: They get two or three more Marines out of bed, and they put rovers – that is, roving Marines – on the compound.

I know something is going on, but really do not know exactly what is going. I got up, got a shower, got dressed, and grabbed my gun, radio and other equipment. I kiss Terri good-bye and take off, go down to the embassy. It’s nice and quiet. I have no idea. I get to the embassy at six o’clock and everybody’s assembled there. My local nationals come back, and they’re in the embassy now. They said, “We couldn’t make it to the hotel. We took a round through the windshield of the car. That was it for us. We turned around.” I called Egypt State Security, but could not find my normal contacts.

Then, the reports start coming in. Then others start trickling in. I’ve got the CIA folks calling me from their office saying, “Hey, is there something going on out at the pyramids?” “What the hell are you asking me for? You’re the CIA for God’s sake! You tell me!” OK, I probably did not say exactly that, but there was probably some level of sarcasm.

But there is definitely something going on at the pyramids. Well, that was just the beginning of a horribly, horribly bad day. Somewhere in there I alerted the Ambassador’s detail, and I sent two agents with the detail out to get the Ambassador. Actually, the Ambassador was gone and DCM Bill Clark was now Chargé d’affaires. I know I called Bill and said, “Something’s grossly wrong here. I think you better come into the embassy, and I’ve sent your detail for you.” Bill’s protective detail brought him to the embassy, and people started assembling. Then things started happening all around us. By this time it’s getting light out. You were there when all this was happening, right?

*Q: I was there. It seems to me I went in to the Embassy thinking it was a normal work day.*

WILLIAMS: Everyone went in thinking it was a normal work day!

*Q: You were alerted to this well before I was.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, but we don't know what's happening. We don't know exactly what's happening. We know something is happening, because we're getting reports now from all over the city that things are going wrong. But then it really starts going *horribly* wrong. Unfortunately, at this point in time I am no longer terribly certain of the sequence of events.

Remember, the police guards that guarded the embassy are the same group of police guards that also guarded the schools, guarded the dams, guarded whatever. As you know, they were conscripts.

*Q: Police conscripts?*

WILLIAMS: Police conscripts. They were something like central security forces or something like that. They were a notch or two below the military. This is very interesting. There were six levels of folks that the military and police would take. The top level were the officers. Let's just say group one. Then it would go down. Group two would be taken as NCOs, people that had education or some education, but didn't quite make it to the officer ranks. By the way, all officers were college graduates. They attended the police college or university, and technically they all had law degrees, if you can believe that. Military officers had some similar regimen. They didn't have law degrees, but whatever. It went on down to like level four and five. Level six nobody would take. Level four was the bottom of what the police would take, and level five was central security forces. They were the worst, barely one step above illiteracy.

*Q: They were farm boys?*

WILLIAMS: They were farm boys or city boys at the low end of the Egypt socio-economic spectrum.

*Q: And they were stationed with rifles in front of every building in Egypt. One hundred or two hundred thousand of them or something like that?*

WILLIAMS: They were horrible! They were all conscripts. They were two-year wonders. It was this group that was rioting.

*Q: Over pay?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. We didn't know that immediately, but we learned it as the morning went on. And they rioted. We had a clue when the officers assigned to protect the embassy made all their men come in and put their weapons in the compound access center out in front, made them lay down their weapons on our property and leave. That was my first clue that we had a real serious problem! [laughter] All the AK-47s. Our compound access center was chock full of AK-47s!! Their officers then dismissed them and only the officers remained, and then a small group of State Security to supplement the officers.

*Q: Police?*

WILLIAMS: Police.

*Q: These guys were police.*

WILLIAMS: I'm sorry. Central Security Forces were police essentially used as guards. Eventually State Security would send regular police, level three or level two, but a skeleton force in comparison to what we normally had.

The same kind of thing took place out at the school, Cairo American College, which was the equivalent of grade school through high school. At Cairo American College, the Central Security Forces police just vanished. They just disappeared.

Then you will recall there was the prison riot that took place as well out in Ma'adi, our housing neighborhood, and all the prisoners were allowed out. Central Security Forces guarded the prisoners, and they just opened the prison gates. The guards just left.

By mid-morning we had a mess all over the city. Everywhere it was a mess. Traffic was at a standstill, things were burning out towards the pyramids. The Holiday Inn had burned to the ground, as well as whatever else had been burned out there. It was a mess, total chaos. I remember thinking it was completely out of hand. I remember Cairo American College calling me and saying, "What are we going to do here? We've got the kids in the gymnasium, we don't have any protection, there are people running all over the compound with guns shooting in the air," so I sent two agents with Uzi submachine guns out to Cairo American College. I'm not sure what I thought they could do. They took an ambulance, going the wrong way down the Corniche, because coming up the Corniche was at a dead standstill. They went to Cairo American College with the kids. It was late morning now. Things are chaos everywhere, and the agents went into the gym with the kids with the Uzis. This had to be a frightening experience for all of these kids. So two agents, machine guns, and I gave my orders to them: "If somebody threatens the kids, you do whatever you have to do." That would have included the use of lethal force.

What a horrible situation. I remember Bill Clark calling me and saying, "Denny, we have to talk." I said, "Bill, let's go outside and talk outside. Let's talk in the parking lot." You know why I'm saying that, don't you?

*Q: Sure.*

WILLIAMS: Trust no walls anywhere. I remember him saying to me, “What do you think? What do you think we ought to do?” I said, “I think you ought to call back to the United States. Call the State Ops Center. I think you ought to ask for the Sixth Fleet to be notified that we may have to be evacuated.” This was a dead serious conversation. I remember Bill – and as I told you earlier I loved him dearly – looking really, really worried. White shirt, no tie, no jacket. Bill never wore a jacket. The long sleeve shirt covered myriad tattoos – a legacy of the Navy, I believe.

*Q: When he wore short sleeves you could see his tattoos.*

WILLIAMS: While they may have looked OK when he was in the Navy, not so much as a senior diplomat in Cairo. I don’t really recall Bill wearing short sleeve shirts but occasionally he would roll up his sleeves and they were quite visible.

**[End Tape 4, side b]**

*Q: Today is April 6, 2008. This is Peter Eicher continuing an interview with Denny Williams. Denny, when we left off on the last tape you were just telling about me one more incident concerning the police riots.*

WILLIAMS: This goes back, Peter, and you and I were trying to put this into a time frame. We believe the time frame was about February 1986...a long time ago. *[Editor’s note: the riots were on February 26, 1986.]*

The police riots... Bill Clark... We just talked about Bill Clark, the Chargé at the time, and I meeting in the parking lot and discussing what we were going to do. At that time I was extremely concerned that we might have to evacuate post. As the day wore on, you could hear shooting all over the city. Chaos reigned supreme. The Central Security Forces police really were of very low socio-economic status, and were generally poorly educated. Generally, they just looked slovenly. The officers did not trust the CSF police, and I remember they brought all of the police guards into our compound access center, right there where the Marine Security Guard was and the local guards, and they made the police guards stack up their weapons inside the embassy, and then leave. I did mention this earlier but it almost bears repeating because it was almost surrealistic. Police leaving their weapons inside the U.S. Embassy. Too much.

*Q: Yes, I think you did mention that already.*

WILLIAMS: OK, sorry. It was just so unbelievable. The guards out at the Cairo American College, really more or less the American school, disappeared. They just vanished.

Something else happened out there that even exacerbated the situation. I may have mentioned that, too, and that is prisoners were released from the prison which is very,

very near Ma'adi, so there was absolute chaos in Ma'adi. As I also mentioned earlier, I sent two agents with submachine guns out to the school to try to get the kids into some sort of protective location or a location where we could better protect them.

As the day wore on the violence continued to increase. The guards at the embassy were replaced by plain clothes State Security people and other uniformed, but real, police. Not nearly as many, but entirely trustworthy, and they began manning positions around the mission. The government of Egypt was trying to do its part in protecting the United States Embassy, and for that I gave them credit.

My contact, a colonel, and I were on the phone constantly all day. He was stressed out, because he just didn't have the United States as one of his missions of responsibility, but rather he had several missions to deal with. We were probably the most demanding. You know us. The chaos continued.

What we generally had in Cairo at that moment in history was a complete breakdown of law and order. It was pretty clear to all of us, clear to me and clear to everybody else that the only way Mubarak was going to re-establish order was to immediately bring the military into play, which he did. As the day wore on we organized a convoy to move out all the staff, all the non-essential staff from the embassy back to Ma'adi, back down to their homes and their families. We really needed to get people out of the compound, because we couldn't support them. We couldn't sustain them. We couldn't feed them. We couldn't do much of anything in terms of creature comforts or sustenance.

There were, however, a large number of us who stayed behind and slept on our couches. The entire RSO staff, except for the two agents that I had in Ma'adi. Also, many of our CIA colleagues and Defense Department colleagues remained, because I needed them to coordinate, were an evacuation to become necessary. We were blessed with a good Defense Attaché Office operation, with DAO folks being absolutely outstanding. We also had an outstanding Marine Security Guard detachment at the embassy with us as well.

The embassy was kind of left that way that night. We got an embassy convoy organized. We got the Egypt military to provide – I believe it was the Egyptian military – to provide some sort of convoy escort. Do you remember Peter?

*Q: I was in one of the convoys back to Ma'adi, and there was in fact some kind of an armored vehicle with a gun of some kind on it, leading the convoy of embassy vehicles out there.*

WILLIAMS: We did get everybody back, and I can't remember if I got home that day somehow to get clothes or not, but I doubt it. We were only holed up in the embassy for a day or two. Back at FBO building 11-11, I can remember hearing incredible noise and looking out my window and seeing this tank coming across the bridge with this 120 millimeter gun out in front thinking, "We're not doing well. We're not doing well at all."

*Q: This was even a couple of days later still.*

WILLIAMS: It must have been. I don't know exactly when I got home to get clothes, shower, etc., but it probably was not that first day.

*Q: Let me ask you, when we started the tape today you were about to ask Bill Clark to summon the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet. Did that happen?*

WILLIAMS: The operations center, the State Department Operations Center, was notified, and the truth of it is I don't recall. The 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet probably did get notified of our concerns, if only because the State Ops Center has military liaison officers. If I had to guess, the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet probably did move in position much closer to the coast of Egypt. Typically it is a Marine unit, like a Marine expeditionary unit, that literally comes in to rescue us. They specially train Marines to rescue embassy staff. As a parenthetical note, as an aside to this, we participate with the Marines in this training, and DS officers assume the roles of ambassador, DCM, RSO, DAO, any number of officials, to help the Marine officers from colonel on down learn how embassies are organized and how to deal with diplomatic staff.

Since I know the protocols, I would guess that the Pentagon probably did start moving the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet, probably was looking for the Marine unit they were going to send in, and they're typically brought in by a helicopter of some sort, off some sort of carrier platform out in the water I no longer recall all the details, since there were just too many things going.

*Q: And it never did actually happen, of course.*

WILLIAMS: It never did actually happen. By the second day the riots started petering out. Everything was closed down. There was essentially martial law in the city. I must say to be fair, the State Security people, who were both our friend and our enemy simultaneously, stayed at their posts throughout the night. They never left us. Things started calming down because the military just put an incredible cordon around the city, then it put curfews into effect, then it controlled all the travel, transportation, and it stopped people from moving, and order came out of chaos. It was probably a couple of days later, before the embassy actually reopened and we were back in business.

*Q: I think that's right. I think the embassy and the school were closed just for several days.*

WILLIAMS: Several days. Those of us back in the embassy were doing the best we could. I was sleeping on my couch in my office. We had C-rations and MREs to eat thanks to our military colleagues.

*Q: I think there was a convoy to take some of the Ma'adi people to the commissary a few days later, because people were running out of food.*

WILLIAMS: Sure. Of course. Why wouldn't there have been? I must tell you "thank you" for adding that. I don't recall that, but I'm sure I had some hand in arranging it.

*Q: No doubt.*

WILLIAMS: You know, right after that happened, and I don't want to belittle this, this was a hugely disturbing psychological event to everybody who was serving in Cairo. What it showed to us all was how tenuous stability could be in that kind of environment. You take for granted – let's be generous here – that in a benevolent dictatorship these things won't happen. Well, it did happen for any number of reasons, and it happened really rapidly, spontaneously and very rapidly, and it got out of hand completely, completely in just a matter of hours.

Not one person from the embassy was hurt. Nobody, but several FSNs on my staff came very close to being killed as their vehicles took gunshot rounds. They were fired upon by whomever as they were going out to the pyramids to try to help the military people, to rescue them, and they did. Thank God nobody did indeed get injured or killed in the whole process.

Let's move on. The riots did come to an end. Stability did return. The police guards got their guns back. The kids went back to school, the prisoners were rounded up. The embassy reopened, the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet, the Marine expeditionary unit stood down, wherever they were.

*Q: I suppose your relationship with your police contacts were probably all the stronger and closer having worked with them in that kind of crisis.*

WILLIAMS: It always is. When you do crisis management together you start bonding. I know you know the obvious, and that is there is a brotherhood in law enforcement. There really, really is, which is why I suppose I still carry my retired credentials. Even in the foreign law enforcement community, when things like this happen, you grow closer, you learn to trust each more, or you learn to trust each other less, which means there would be no relationship. But in fact the Egyptian police, the State Security people whom I dealt with were quite professional. They did come immediately to our aid, and I really don't have much to say other than praise for how they reacted and how responsive they were to our needs.

So it ended and things stabilized, and I started doing the right thing by going diving in Sharm el-Sheik and the Red Sea. I had foolishly passed up three opportunities to go with Ambassador Nick Veliotes, who was an avid diver. I pooh-poohed the idea of diving on the U.S. government's dime with the ambassador to Egypt. What was wrong with me? I was completely insane! I could have gone diving for free! Nick was...Ambassador Veliotes was a very committed diver and went every weekend he could. I always sent an agent with him, but somebody who didn't even dive. But, in fact, I got my son diver-certified and we started going diving down in Sharm el-Sheik on the Red Sea, probably one of the top five dive destinations in the entire world, and that's no exaggeration.

*Q: And at the time, very undeveloped from a touristic point of view, correct?*

WILLIAMS: Thank you, Peter. There were two hotels both of which had been built by Israelis. One was called Hilltop. We stayed there. Very austere, to be polite. I just don't remember the other hotel.

*Q: I think it was Marina Sharm, wasn't it?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, I believe that is correct.

*Q: I believe so, and they were both dumps.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, they wouldn't have made one star in a five star rating. They were both dumps, and I remember I started going with there with Nick Baskey, who was our admin minister-counselor. Nick and I became fast friends. My boss, he used to be my boss, but we became good friends. Typically he and I would go alone, go diving, and by the end of the second or third dive we were so friggin' cold. We were diving in the winter months where the air is not cold, but the Red Seas was. The water was so cold at Sharm in the winter, I mean *so* cold. Then we'd end the day smoking a cigar, drinking beer and talking about Egypt and politics, and international events of the moment or whatever.

About this time something else started happening. There was an increase in peace negotiations in the Middle East; there was always the hope of peace somehow. Never seems to be within our grasp, and the then Secretary of State, then George Shultz, started making more and more trips to Egypt. I know you understand what a Secretary of State visit does to a post regardless of how small or large your post is. It would turn out that Secretary Shultz would make somewhere between, as I recall, a minimum of eight, if not 10 visits, within almost a 12 month period. It just absolutely destroyed our ability to get any other significant work done, investigations, things that we would normally do.

These visits initially started out with a certain degree of rancor. I might add this is when I met the current Under Secretary for Management, Pat Kennedy. As it would turn out, on the very first or second visit I was out at the airport on the tarmac waiting for the Secretary to arrive, and of course the Secretary travels with his own fairly significant Diplomatic Security protective detail. But our agents, the agents I have in Cairo, provide absolutely essential support since the agents with the Secretary would be lost trying to get around Cairo.

As to how I met Pat Kennedy, one of the Secretary's special assistants... Well, I remember I got in the Secretary's limo to move it because I could see the Secretary's limo was somewhat out of place. So I jumped in the car. Then Pat Kennedy appears and jumps in front of the car screaming, "You can't move this car!" to which I use one of those phrases so near and dear to DS agents. I said something like, "I'm going to run your friggin' little ass over if you don't move. Get out of the way." That's how Pat and I met. [laughter] And I'm glad to say I saw him last week in the cafeteria, and he doesn't hold

grudges. Actually, after we both knew who each other was, we worked well together during these visits.

*Q: That's good!*

WILLIAMS: We did become, like, work-friends, or at least we became friendly. We would see Pat Kennedy and the entire entourage from the secretary's staff literally almost once a month. This went on and on and on, and it was very demanding on the entire mission. In fact, I'm sure you in the political section must have had similar demands on your time as well, escorting people and taking them around and to do whatever. But all of that would eventually come to an end, and that would take us to May.

*Q: We had the vice president once as well. I remember having George Bush, Sr.*

WILLIAMS: You're absolutely right because we had the Secret Service there. That was interesting. During that same period of time we had not just George Bush, but we had Jimmy Carter.

*Q: You're right!*

WILLIAMS: He came with his wife Rosalynn and Amy was on one or more of those trips as well.

*Q: Jimmy Carter, former president.*

WILLIAMS: Former President Jimmy Carter, and at some point he brought his wife and daughter. That was always interesting, too, and of course the Secret Service protected Jimmy Carter. They were so understaffed, and I remember the Secret Service agents in Carter's detail coming to me and literally saying, "We need to borrow some agents. We can't do this here with the numbers we have. Can we borrow three or four or five of your agents, please?" And I loaned them agents. I never thought I'd see the day when the Secret Service would come begging. It made my entire tour! And, I said this as the former chief – and we've already talked about this – of the DS dignitary protective division. But in fact, relations between the Secret Service and state were only getting better and better, year by year.

*Q: I think it is a good commentary to highlight how many high level visitors were in Cairo all the time, and that was only the tip end, because there were endless congressmen...*

WILLIAMS: CODELS.

*Q: ...and assistant secretaries and so forth, and the peace process talks certainly went on for the full two years that I was there, non-stop.*

WILLIAMS: I think the most onerous portion, however, was when the Secretary was coming almost every month. There was no way for my office to escape involvement... none whatsoever. You know, a CODEL comes and you can hand him off as much as possible, force him off as much as possible, to the Egyptian police and the political section. You know what I mean, Peter?

*Q: I know what you mean.*

WILLIAMS: Push him over to the political section where they belong. But you can't escape a Secretary of State. You cannot escape a Vice President of the United States or a former President, because you can't let the Secret Service – and I don't mean this disrespectfully – you can't let the Secret Service go out on the streets alone in a foreign country, because they just truly don't have a clue. That's not the environment they're familiar working in. When they come overseas they are truly like ducks out of water, if I might use a trite metaphor. They really are. And they knew that. The good news is they knew that, and they never failed to ask for help, and we never failed to provide them help.

*Q: We did find as time went along that the American embassy itself was under threat from terrorists at this point.*

WILLIAMS: Well, it was. You have to understand the way the situation was working back then. We'd already had Marines blown up, I think you will recall, in 1982 in Beirut. We all remember what happened in Tehran in '79, and so terrorism had become a big thing. The Diplomatic Security Act had been passed in 1985, '86, recognizing the fact that the Department of State needed an absolutely competent and capable law enforcement and security arm to deal with all of these problems overseas. Cairo was no exception.

Here's the problem. By then our intelligence agencies were so skittish that they gave you every indication of a threat with little evaluation as to the validity of it. So I could have the equivalent of a foot-tall stack of paper on my desk with all this unanalyzed and often dubious information, and somewhere in that stack was a piece that was true, and I couldn't find it any better than anybody else could. It was the way, if I can be perfectly honest, the CIA covered its ass. It was giving us *everything*...too much. And we had no more idea what to take seriously than anyone else did, and neither did they. We went from one threat situation to the next to the next to the next.

The RSO office, I don't know if you recall, Peter, did put out kind of little newsletters and announcements when things were happening. I know, 20 years. Why can't you remember those? My prose!

*Q: It must have been good.*

WILLIAMS: It was good.

*Q: I don't know why...*

WILLIAMS: I wrote every one of them.

*Q: I'm getting senile, I'm sure.*

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: We did try to put out threat advisories and keep people informed, but you can only yell "the sky is falling" so many times, and we knew that. I knew that better than anybody. You can't crank people up into a different threat condition only to have one more time that nothing happens. That's kind of the situation we were in, trying to take this day by day and evaluate the real from the unreal, and it's an impossible thing to do. It's absolutely an impossible thing to do.

*Q: If I recall, you were taking lots of precautions beyond what I had seen at other embassies; for example, all of the vehicles in which we were shuttled to and from work were lightly armored, and I even remember you organizing a course of special people to come in and show us how to fight and shoot guns and that kind of thing.*

WILLIAMS: We did. I brought in the Mobile Security Division. The lightly armored shuttles didn't take place until after May 1987. Then, for cause, they were all brought in. We'll go to May 1987 shortly. We brought in the Mobile Security Division, MSD. Today it's the Office of Mobile Security Deployment, but same acronym, MSD. I had MSD agents train embassy staff on how to fight, shoot, drive cars, and to just better handle themselves in a terrorist situation or terrorist environment. I believed in my heart of hearts it was only a matter of time.

If I can take you back in history, in 1985 early, before I was even in Cairo, as a senior DS officer I was the duty officer for the weekend. I already had my assignment to Cairo. I remember being called by the State Ops Center, and being asked to come down to the Ops Center, that there was important highly classified traffic that they needed somebody from DS to see. It was all about a threat in Cairo. I thought, "How ironic is this now," about a serious threat in Cairo, and there was nothing to it. Something did transpire, and I can't recall what, but nobody in Cairo was hurt or injured, and it was eventually neutralized in due course, but at that moment I thought to myself, "You're not exactly going into the Bahamas anymore."

Now transport yourself back to 1986, 1987. We all know it's going to be a matter of time and something is going to happen. I think as an RSO one of your greatest fears are people for whom you share a responsibility with others, the ambassador, the DCM, whomever, you really don't want to see them killed. You really, really don't because that's kind of like losing a citizen for whom you have protective responsibility or a principal. When I was with Prince Charles, my greatest fear and the thing that kept me up every night was that somebody would shoot him or otherwise harm him. "I'm here with him, and I'm responsible for him." You don't want that to happen when you're an RSO either. You really don't. But that does take us to May 1987. May 26th or 27th, 1987.

I need to back this up just a step to tell you that we had started receiving phone calls about March of '87, from an unknown caller asking to talk to the ambassador. Now, the phone operators could never put a call like that through to the ambassador, but they do put them through to the RSO office. We were used to taking crank calls. That happened all the time. This guy was really serious. He didn't have the same kind of aura of incompetency as you would get with so many of these people who were just crazy. This guy knew something, so we kind of played him that day, and we gave him another phone number to call.

We said, "You know, you're never going to get through to the ambassador, but this is the deputy ambassador, and if you call this number we'll get you through to the deputy ambassador, and you can tell him whatever your concern is." Of course we impersonated the deputy ambassador. The deputy ambassador was Ken Kayatin. The problem was we never knew when this guy was going to call, and that was extremely problematic. You know, he'd call at ten o'clock in the morning, then he'd call at five o'clock at night, and it was just a crap shoot as to whether somebody would be there to talk to him. But what he was saying – always to Ken Kayatin, because we stayed consistent with one person so he'd come to recognize the voice – was that something bad was going to happen soon. By the way, this was an Egyptian national who spoke English fluently.

What he was saying was we were going to be attacked, that he was with a group named Egypt's Revolution. We knew that group. They had successfully attacked Israeli diplomats in Cairo on at least four occasions and had killed and maimed Israeli diplomats. He kept calling and he kept saying, "The time's coming. The time's coming." Not terribly helpful information, truthfully, but it scared us all to death, because we knew something was going to happen. We knew something was coming at us. He told us Egypt's Revolution had made a decision, had made a decision to not just kill Israelis, but to also kill Americans as well.

*Q: But nothing more specific or as we'd say these days "actionable" intelligence?*

WILLIAMS: Nothing actionable until like May 25<sup>th</sup>, and you'd have to go back and get that calendar for 1987. It was Monday late, late in the afternoon. Phone rings. Our informant is back on the line and he says, "I don't know precisely when, and I don't know precisely where, but you will be attacked very, very soon." Well, that gets your attention.

The next morning as usual I got into my government car, a brand new Peugeot 505 GS or whatever, top of the line station wagon, two weeks old, grille lights, siren and radio systems. I loved this car. I went over to pick up John Hucke, another agent, and on the way in we saw John Ford, who was one of the GSOs standing and waiting for the bus, so we pulled over, and he got in the back seat. So off the three of us go, coming out of Ma'adi and heading up the Corniche, the major road that parallels the Nile River towards downtown Cairo.

In the security business we often refer to people being in various conditions of situational awareness. Literally, how aware are you of what is going on around you? It ranges from condition white to condition red, condition red being entirely on alert, being aware of your surroundings, expecting trouble, expecting danger. Condition white, you have no clue what is going on around you. It's the state most of us live in most of the time, and on that fateful Tuesday morning with a cup of coffee in one hand and a chatty mouth going with... You know, the other hand driving the car and chatting away with John Huckle and John Ford, paying no attention to much of anything going on around us. A bad state of awareness.

We went up the Corniche and were a little earlier than usual. The traffic was fairly light. I remember that we came to a traffic light, and we were in the first row of cars at the traffic light. As I pulled away from that traffic light, we were talking away. We went several hundred more yards up the road and were about to go under a flyover or a road above us. I remember noting that a Peugeot station wagon, an old beat up Peugeot station wagon resembling one of the many, many Peugeots used for taxis around Cairo, had been at the right curb and pulled away from the right curb and kind of was moving across the lanes of traffic toward us. I didn't think a lot about it at the time. We're kind of in the far left hand lane, and he's coming from the far right side except he kept coming and coming and coming.

At some point I realized this car is going to hit us, and that's not a good thing, because this car's a brand new U.S. government Peugeot, two weeks old, assigned to me. I don't want this fool to hit me. And he kept coming. At one point I just dropped my coffee. I probably dropped it on the floor and let it go or put it down. Who knows? Changed gears and realized I had to do something or he is going to hit us. I don't know what's going on here or what this guy is doing. "Is he crazy?"

I decided that the only way to avoid him is to do a maneuver that literally took me up on the sidewalk. Now the sidewalk, the curbs if you will, are pretty steep along the Corniche, but if you take a curb at a 45 degree angle or a little less, you'll jump it. In most cases you can jump it. If you take it head-on at a 90 degree angle you very well may rip your car apart, literally. This is part of vehicle training, all the stuff that we've gone through. So, I aim my car at the curb and realize I'm going to jump the curb, I'm going to go up on the sidewalk, because I do not want this fool to hit me. Somewhere in there too, I noted the driver of the car had on what looked like a winter hat, maybe a Russian winter hat with kind of Snoopy flaps over his ears. Does that make sense? His ears are covered. The point is his ears are covered by this winter cap. People don't wear winter caps in Cairo!

In any event, that was really strange, but I've seen stranger things in New York City, so it's hard to get too excited about just seeing strange. At some point after I noted the strangeness of the driver, after I noted the car was still coming at us, and I'd made the decision to jump the curb to get away from him, almost in slow motion the popping sounds of what would turn out to be gunfire began. I remember seeing the right hand passenger side window turn opaque as it was struck by a round completely shattering the

entire window, and then it collapsed. Same for the back window, and then the other windows started being hit by bullets and pretty much disintegrating.

Somewhere in here I realized we were under attack and people were shooting at us. My first instinct was – and I did – to draw my gun, and intellectually I realized that was a bad idea. I needed to focus on using my biggest weapon, the car, and so I put the gun away. I put the gun down between my legs and started changing gears on the car and realizing I had to use the car as a weapon. Somewhere in here too it dawned on me what this attacking vehicle was trying to do. He was trying to get ahead of us so he could then pull in front of us blocking us. He was going to use the curb as the left hand side retainer wall, if you will, and then his vehicle literally in front of us to bring us to a stop.

What I didn't know at the time was that there was a shooter on the sidewalk, a shooter with an AK-47. He had had a big tool case, this was reported by witnesses later, and as we approached in the vehicle he put his tool case down, a very large tool case, opened it up, and took out an AK-47. He too started shooting our car; however, as I had jumped the curb and now I had one set of wheels, the left front and rear wheels, up on the curb, that is on the sidewalk, and had the right side wheels down in the street. I am an angled vehicle, but I'm coming down the sidewalk quite fast at him. He kept shooting, but ultimately had to jump out of the way, because I would have hit him. We, of course, never saw him since we were ducked down in the car trying not to get shot.

Meanwhile, the attacking vehicle is still trying to get ahead of us, but he can't. He's not powerful enough. My newer Peugeot is much more powerful. Furthermore, even if he had gotten ahead of us and pulled to the curb to try and block us by placing the front of his vehicle right into the curb, because of my angle, I would have hit his vehicle at his front wheel well. That's where you hit a vehicle if you want to spin or move it out of the way. In other words, he couldn't have blocked me. He had lost the race already, and it was only by happenstance that I had half my car up on the sidewalk and half of it in the street. It was only fortuitous luck and perhaps a little reliance on training, that ensured the attack could not have stopped us. We got lucky. We got really, really lucky.

He kept powering through. I figured out, you know, in seconds what he was trying to do and that he was trying to get ahead of us, and I decided, "You're not going to get ahead of us. I can drive better than you," and I just out drove him. I got to the middle of the southbound side of the Corniche, and so turned south to try to outrun the attackers. We had been coming up the Corniche northbound, but when I turned to head southbound, I turned violently to the left and took off south down the Corniche. There were no cars; there was no traffic; the attacking vehicle stopped right there, at kind of an intersection of a crossover between north and south lanes of the Corniche.

I knew almost immediately something was wrong, though. The car wasn't steering properly. In my rather violent turn to the left to head into the southbound lanes, I had literally ripped the tire off the wheel, so the car wasn't going to go anywhere for long. I pulled it all the way to the left side of the road. John Hucke and I got out of the car; I think John Ford stayed in the car. We got behind the side, drew our weapons and waited,

watched for the attacking vehicle which was just sitting up there looking at us. We waited for them to come down the road. I don't know whether they could see from the distance that we did have weapons or not. I don't know. In any event, for whatever reason, they decided to break off the attack. The car turned to the right and went back up the Corniche on the north side, getting off the southbound lanes.

After the fact we were able to piece several things together. It took a while, and how we got all the pieces is not very important, but we pieced them all together eventually, and that is this: There were three attackers. There was the driver of the Peugeot, and he had a revolver, and the earflaps, the funny hat, was really to protect his ears from the sound. The attacking Peugeot back windows had been taken out so as not to hamper the shooter with an AK-47 in the back seat of the Peugeot, to give that shooter a view and a clear field of fire without any constraints from the glass. The shooter on the sidewalk with another AK-47 was another part of the killing plan. The goal was to put us in a crossfire of sorts, shooters on the right of us and shooters off to our left front, and then kill us all. It was a good plan. It was a very good plan. It probably would have worked on somebody else.

Here's what actually happened. First, they never foresaw the possibility that I would jump the curb and ride the car with of it on the sidewalk and the other half in the street. That precluded them for blocking and stopping us. The shooter on the sidewalk was shooting at our car as we came at him, but he had to jump out of the way as we drove the sidewalk pretty much aimed at him. Then he shot through our car and shot the man in the back seat of the attacking Peugeot, wounding him. That was obviously unplanned, and that changed their plans drastically. What happened is that after we broke left and took off southbound down the Corniche and then pulled the car to the side of the road and got out and took cover, they decided it was better to fight again another day. With an injured man in the back of the Peugeot, the shooter on the sidewalk ran over and got in the Peugeot as well, and all three of them sped off.

The other thing we obviously pieced together, after the fact, was that there was likely a spotter, if not two spotters on the Corniche. The spotter decided which vehicle would be attacked. The spotter radioed the other members of the attack team – the person on the sidewalk and the people in the car, and told them what the target was going to be. We were a target of opportunity. We were a car with full US diplomatic license plates, there were three men in the car, there were no Arabs in the car, there were no females in the car. We were the perfect target. The spotter is only someone we speculated about, but we're fairly certain. I don't remember if we confirmed that fact, that detail, later or not. In any event that's most likely the way it all went down; the spotter, two shooters in the vehicle and one shooter on the sidewalk.

As you can imagine, we were a mess. At some point – if I may I'll put this in the vernacular – I looked at John Hucke, and he was bleeding all over the place on his head, and I said, "John, you look like shit. You're bleeding from whatever." He said, "*I'm* bleeding? What about you?" I was stunned. I said, "What, I'm bleeding?" He said, "Yeah, you're bleeding from the front of your head, and you're bleeding from your head

in back.” You start doing an immediate head check with your hands to figure out where the holes are. John Ford kind of crawled out of the car. He had not been injured. By now passersby were stopping. I got on the radio, called the Marines back in the embassy, and put them on what we called Alert Condition One which means every Marine is under arms somewhere on that compound. I radioed for two agents to come to what was going to be Al Salam Hospital, because at this point an Egyptian passerby had stopped and said, “Let me take you guys down to the hospital,” so I knew where we were going. I’ve never lost my love or respect for Egyptians. They were as concerned that this would happen in their country as anybody. An Egyptian male took all three of us down to the hospital, which was only maybe a mile, mile and a half away, not very far away. At the hospital I chose not to be treated. They cleansed my wounds but that was it.

It’s a funny story about the bill I got for this. They cleansed my wounds, and John Hucke chose to let them stitch him up. I chose not to. John Ford had not been injured. I called the Marine on my radio and told the Marine to call my wife, tell her what happened and that I was OK, and tell her I needed a clean set of clothes, suits, shirt, everything, and I needed them at the hospital.

That was kind of an interesting moment, because Kathy Ford is John Ford’s wife. John Ford, the assistant GSO, was in the back of our car with us. The school was notified by the embassy. Kathy Ford was sent to find our kids, both Chris and Jeff, and that was tough. Chris was much better, went right home to Terri. Jeff went into denial and refused to acknowledge what they were telling him. Terri meanwhile got in the car to come down to bring me clothes as I had asked. I changed shirts and suits and gave it all to her and told her to take it immediately to a dry cleaners, because I knew when the investigative team was sent in they would want my \$500 suit as evidence without writing me a \$500 check. I thought, “You know, I don’t need this suit with blood over it to prove I’ve been shot,” and so I destroyed evidence intentionally and saved my suit.

*Q: You were thinking of things that other people wouldn’t have thought of under those circumstances. Apparently you were shot in the head if it was bleeding out the back of your head.*

WILLIAMS: Exactly...exactly. In fact, it would turn out that I was essentially grazed on the front and back of my head, two relatively superficial wounds. Neither bullet had penetrated. Both had ridden under the skin. Both had exited. Both wounds were clean. I’d also been hit on the back, but it had been a bullet that ricocheted through the car, eventually went through the back of my car seat and impacted me in the back. What it looked like is somebody had taken a baseball bat and hit me on the back, because I had concentric rings of bruises. It was just unreal and again, had no idea. Never felt it. In fact, I never felt getting shot.

*Q: And John Hucke was...*

WILLIAMS: Shot in the head as well. John was... I think he was much more psychologically bothered by it than I was. I think it really, really bothered him that he’d

come that close to being killed. In any event, I think he suffered far more pain and traumatic impact. And he may have been hit harder. He probably was hit harder by the bullets. It clearly grazed me, but the bullets had not penetrated, and this is really important. They had grazed us both, but had not penetrated. I mean, how much luckier can you get? I suppose the answer is don't get shot at all.

*Q: Three bullets at least in the head and nobody seriously injured. It was quite remarkable.*

WILLIAMS: It is remarkable.

*Q: And you went right back to work?*

WILLIAMS: I did. A couple agents came down to Al Salam Hospital, and I rode with them. The car was a mess. We sent staff from the embassy to go get the car. As you can imagine, bullet holes everywhere...blood everywhere. That car was brought out to the embassy compound that afternoon, and it became quite a showpiece. Do you remember that at all, being in the compound?

*Q: I can't say that I do, no.*

WILLIAMS: Eventually it was covered up. They put a big canvas cover over the car, because it looked pretty bad.

I went back to the embassy. I think we sent John Hucke home. In retrospect that may have been a mistake, and I can't recall whether that's exactly what happened or not. I went back to the embassy. I knew for me there was no escaping by saying, "I don't feel well. I'm going to go home and take the rest of the day off. Had a bad morning?"

*Q: I think people would have allowed you to do that.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, they probably would have. I remember coming back onto the compound, and the first person I met was from AID. USAID, Agency for International Development. I remember to this day the words out of his mouth, "Thank God that happened to you!"

[laughter]

Now I knew what he meant, but right after he said it he realized how stupid it sounded, and he said, "No, no! I didn't mean it that way!" I said, "No, it's OK. I understand what you meant."

*Q: Because, in fact, any number of cars, what, two dozen, three dozen, would travel the same route, toward the same place, the same morning, with embassy people.*

WILLIAMS: That's right, and they would probably have been much less equipped with whatever wherewithal was necessary to survive the situation. You know, we could fight. We are taught how to drive; we are taught how to shoot, over and over how to shoot. We knew what to do. We knew that you couldn't block us, because I'll ram you and move you. That's the kind of training that most political officers, econ officers, AID officers, or whomever don't get, nor was there much of a need up until that point. I'm not so sure that's true today anymore, but it certainly was true back then. But the world was changing. This was the beginning of the changes that would change the Foreign Service forever, and the world that we now have that is far more dangerous.

*Q: Were these people ever apprehended?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. The story has an end. Anyway, from kind of a personal perspective, I did go back to the embassy. I did go down to the medical unit, and they brought in a surgeon. It was an Egyptian surgeon, but somebody that had been trained in the United States, and I chose to have him do the stitches for me, rather than have them done at Al Salam Hospital. And he did.

Somewhere while I was laying there on the table and he was, you know, running the needle and thread through the bullet holes, our psychiatrist Hal Rineer showed up with his wonderful questions that you see in movies: Well, Denny, how do you feel? At which point, some point, I said, "Hal, I really don't want to put up with your bullshit right now. I love you dearly, but I'm just fine, now leave," and he did. He did. We knew each other well enough to do that, and he was not offended. He judged me to be just fine, because I knew what he was doing. He was evaluating me psychologically, and I understood that, but I was fine. I was fine. From there we went into the emergency session of the country team, and from there we went into an emergency session of the emergency action committee, and things started happening.

Interestingly enough, within that day, before the end of that day was over, I got a phone call from DS, and they wanted to pull me out. I said, "Nah, I don't want to leave."

*Q: On the basis that the trauma would make you not want to be there anymore?*

WILLIAMS: I think because they thought it was the right thing to do, but they couldn't articulate why.

*Q: They were offering you a favor, an honorable way out if you wanted to.*

WILLIAMS: Yes. Yes. You know, it was not clear at that time whether I or others in the car were the target of the attack, it would seem unlikely, or it was an attack was of a target of opportunity, as it would turn out to be.

**[End of Tape 5a]**

*Q: This is tape 5, side b. Peter Eicher is continuing the interview with Dennis Williams. So they called you back and told you that you must leave Cairo?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, must leave Cairo. That prompted one of those confrontations with people you really like and respect, that you don't want to have. I said to Don on the phone, I said, "Don," I said, "I'm not leaving." I said, "I'm not leaving." I said, "I'll go to the ambassador, Ambassador Wisner, by then Frank Wisner had arrived. He was a great guy; we had a great working relationship. I said, "I'll go to the ambassador and the ambassador will step up on my behalf. I know he will." But I said, "Don, that's not the reason." I said, "What kind of signal are you sending to the people here at this post if you deem it too dangerous for your senior RSO to be here? Is that the message we really want to send here that we really want to give out?" I said, "I'm not scared here and I am fine, Don. I know how to deal with this, I am dealing with it, and the ambassador will be on my side. Don, leave me alone and leave me here, please. It'll only get messy," and DS blinked. I really did want to stay.

Of course, what I failed to mention was that Terri was only hours away from her degree at American University in Cairo! I thought, "Why do I want to waste all this money, and she will have wasted all this time?" I didn't want to leave. I don't want you to misread what I just said. I did not want to leave for the reasons I articulated, but I also wanted Terri to finish her bachelor's degree. She had postponed that for me, for the kids, for everything else for way too long. It was her turn. And honestly, we liked Cairo and Egypt and really were not ready to leave.

*Q: Did she and the kids also want to stay?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely! They weren't scared. We did several things differently. We did a lot of things differently right away. We established mobile patrols. I don't know if you remember the mobile patrols, but we had five or six mobile patrol units patrolling 24 hours a day. They were really the forerunners of what we now deploy all over the world, though they weren't really as covert, and that is surveillance detection teams. Their job was to be out there day after day, run the routes that the buses would run, the vans would run, all of this would run, run the routes looking for risks and to respond to problems. If embassy staff had a problem at night, like somebody trying to break in or whatever it was, mobile patrol units would respond to that. I think it was an innovative initiative that paid off a great deal. It brought an increased sense of safety and security to the embassy community, and would be emulated at other posts over time.

*Q: I've seen it at other posts since then.*

WILLIAMS: Yes. Now we've taken it a little further in that we have covert surveillance detection teams. Our mobile patrols were very overt. Again, black station wagons with grille lights and radio systems and whatever, but we intended to be overt, to be a presence that would be seen and observed, so we had them out there. Then DS in Washington asked me what I wanted. I said, "I want a lightly armored vehicle, a couple of them, for

the RSO office.” They said, “You got it.” They were Chevys, huge police pack Chevys fully equipped with sirens, lights, radios, all kinds of things, and armoring in the windows and doors. They said, “What else do you want?” I said, “Lightly armored vans for our shuttles, because I don’t want out shuttles running up and down the Corniche any more, with no armoring on them, and I want more agents. I want additional agents to provide protection to the ambassador.” “You got it.” I got everything. I got everything I requested. When stuff like this happens, no one want to say “no” because no one wants to assume responsibility should something further untoward happen.

These were kind of the immediate steps. They sent me immediately four more agents who I assigned to the ambassador’s protective detail, two per shift, just because I wanted to make sure. I must tell you Captain Helmy, who was in charge of the ambassador’s Egypt Police protective detail, was superb and having my agents ride with him and his officers only confirmed what I already had pretty good feeling about. They were extremely professional, well-trained, in part by DS, and extremely dedicated to the protection of the ambassador. I have no doubt that the Egyptian police would have done anything necessary to protect the ambassador. My agents were just able to supplement what was already extremely good. So with the lightly armored vehicles and RSO vehicles for us, we improved overall embassy staff security.

By the way, DS sent in an investigative team and almost immediately they asked me for the clothes I was wearing the day I was shot assuming, I guess, they I would just put the bloody suit in a bag. It was with great joy that I told them, “Oh, sorry, it’s been dry-cleaned.”

They sent in a colleague of mine, Pat O’Hanlon. I don’t really even have the words to describe what Pat brought to Egypt, but let’s just say Pat did not stay there very long and did go back to the U.S. The investigation was pretty simple: We got attacked by terrorists. We were not killed. Other than the name, Egypt’s Revolution, we really did not know who the bad guys were and neither did the police. End of story. And they were still out there.

Okay, so what’s going on next? Our informant kept calling. He said, “I told you so.” I didn’t know where and I didn’t know when, but I knew it was soon. I told you so.” And this continues on into June.

Except Terri, our kids and I, we’re getting on an airplane. We had home leave and we’re going Illinois and Virginia. You know, we’ve got parents who are absolutely beside themselves about what has just happened, and so we flew home. I think agent Ken Kayatin was in charge. He was the senior officer I left in charge. There were several other DS officers there, but Ken was the senior. I remember when it was time to come back in August after having a wonderful home leave, I think we went to Cyprus for a while. We just had a good time. On the way back, whoever we were flying back on, pick an airline, doesn’t matter...

*Q: Probably TWA.*

WILLIAMS: Probably TWA. I'd have to guess it was TWA. They were inaugurating their new phone service, their new cellular phone service or whatever it was, and they offered me – this is no joke – they offered me 30 minutes to call anywhere in the world I wanted to call. I called my office in Cairo! I just left my parents. Why would I want to call them? I called my office in Cairo and said, “Ken, what’s new?” He said, “This guy, our informant, we’re going to bring him in. We’re still working him, and it’s getting better and better all the time. We’re ready to have you back here.”

And so I got back to Cairo, kind of got caught up on things right away. Big things. In fact our informant was calling. So I went around to the various police agencies. I went out to see the military intelligence general whose name happened to be... What the heck was his name? Very bright guy, extremely bright guy. Oh yes, Abdul Rahman. There was an Abdul Rahman arrested in New York, so we have to be careful, but as you know, Peter, a lot of the Arab names are similar or even the same – the infamous “Mohammed,” who probably exists by the thousands in the Arab world. They share similar first and often last names. Anyway, General Rahman was a smart guy, and I respected him a great deal. We gave him all the tapes to listen to and when he listened to the last tape, he said, “Oh, this guy’s a fraud. He wants money.” I said, “General, I don’t believe that.” He said, “No, I’m telling you. I’m an Egyptian. I know Egyptians. He’s a fraud.” I did respect the guy, and I will be generous here today by saying he made a mistake. On that day he just made a mistake.

As it turned out, the informant was not a fraud and finally after months of talking to this guy we arranged to meet him at three o’clock in the middle of the night. It was a wonderful story as if it were from Tom Clancy or Robert Ludlum. Every agent I had was up and working in the middle of the night. We set up a van with the “DCM,” Ken Kayatin, an agent, an agent driver, and one other agent in the van. Then we had two muscle cars on opposite ends of the street: one at one end of the street, where the pickup was to take place and one at the other end of the street, our Chevy Impalas. They had three or four agents in each car. I took a couple of fully armed Marines with us that night, probably the Detachment Commander and his deputy. We had a bunch of Uzi submachine guns, because we didn’t know for absolute fact this wasn’t a trap.

We didn’t think it was a trap, but we didn’t know, so we set up for contingencies so if something were to happen to the van, the muscle cars would come to the rescue. “Muscle car” is just a term that had been made up and used for protective operations. You have a car that you can literally send to attack another car, if that car is attacking the motorcade. You literally have a muscle car to ram them and take them off the road and do whatever they have to do. In this case, these were response vehicles. Our muscle cars were response vehicles if anything went wrong with the pickup plan.

Nothing went wrong. The guy was where he was supposed to be at three o’clock in the morning. He got in the van. We went in the back gates of the embassy. They were never used. Nobody even knew they opened, we knew they opened. We brought him to our offices. We had set up recording equipment in my office and the interview, the

debriefing, began in another RSO office down the hall. I had a couple of guys there from the CIA. Ken Kayatin was in disguise, and Ken and a CIA officer identified as an aide to the “deputy ambassador” began the debriefing process. This was a very well-informed former member of the group known as Egypt’s Revolution, and he began talking, and talk he did.

This would be one of several meetings, clandestine meetings. The next meetings weren’t at three o’clock in the morning, but late at night when we didn’t have so many observers. We always brought him in through the back of the embassy, never through the main entrances, and no one ever knew we were talking to him.

*Q: Can I just ask as an aside whether the Egyptian security was aware of this?*

WILLIAMS: Not initially. After we did the first interview, maybe the first and second interviews, I went to my contact the state security liaison officer and said, “you know we’ve had this informant. I’ve told you, Colonel, about this before. This is not new. We’ve got him in the embassy.” They became extremely interested. They did not participate in the debriefings, but soon after this point state security, maybe even military intelligence, had people in my office with us.

We were all listening to this person just down the hall, and we had both audio and video. My colleagues in the CIA had wired up the room for me, so we had both video and audio, and we could listen and see in real time what was transpiring in the interview room. We all sat in my office, which was quite large, and listened to and watched the debriefing as it was taking place. Obviously, the Egyptian police became believers instantly. This guy did know what he was talking about. I don’t remember any of their names at this point, but he, our informant, was the brother of the leader of the group Egypt’s Revolution. While he had never disagreed with killing Jews, he did disagree with killing Americans, and his brother the leader knee-capped him. This was a bad man, that is his brother. If you don’t know what the term “knee-capping” means, it means somebody puts a revolver or pistol or something to your kneecap and pulls the trigger. Typically shatters the kneecap, and you’re crippled damn near for life.

*Q: This had happened before he turned informer?*

WILLIAMS: Before. He shot in him in the leg. I don’t think he effectively kneecapped him, but he did shoot him in the leg and that as you can imagine broke the bond of brotherhood. So this guy was out of the group; nevertheless, he still had some friends in the group, and they did keep him informed. The group was pretty large, too. As I recall there were like 20 or 30 terrorists, so a substantial number. Debriefings went on and on and on, and by late September the police had enough information to do what they did, which was to do a pre-dawn raid at the homes and locations of every one of these people, and they did indeed arrest them all.

All of this was much to the relief of the Egyptian police I might add. It was a rather embarrassing phenomenon to have these people out killing Israelis, Israeli diplomats, and

then trying, albeit unsuccessfully, to kill Americans. They had already planned their next attack, and this was a real relief for us and for the police. It kind of makes your blood curdle. They had planned to attack the shuttle bus that went out to the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit 3, more commonly referred to as NAMRU-3. Have I already told you this, Peter? Have I told you about the shuttle?

*Q: I don't recall that in particular.*

WILLIAMS: This was a pretty diabolical plan on their part. Not pretty...quite evil and likely to have been quite lethal.

*Q: Just for the benefit of the people...*

WILLIAMS: I will explain.

*Q: ...NAMRU-3 was...*

WILLIAMS: NAMRU-3 had been there since after World War II, and when the Americans in the embassy had been kicked out of Egypt, no one had ever kicked out NAMRU-3 staff, mostly a medical research staff, because of all the research they did on desert diseases and things of that nature that were of direct benefit to Egyptians. So the Egyptian government actually never had a reason, and never wanted NAMRU-3 personnel to leave. So NAMRU-3 stayed even when there was no embassy in Egypt.

What Egypt's Revolution decided to do was to attack the shuttle bus that traversed back and forth from the embassy compound to NAMRU-3. They had a pretty well thought out plan. As the shuttle came out the gate at NAMRU they were going to roll hand grenades under the shuttle. The hand grenades would explode, the shuttle would start being engulfed in fire, and people would come jumping and screaming out of the shuttle, at which point they would simply gun them down with AK-47s. They really, really wanted to kill some Americans. They really did. They wanted badly to kill Americans. The NAMRU-3 shuttle would have been a soft, easy target.

We learned of this only through the Egyptian police. I mean, we didn't learn this ourselves. We learned it from the Egyptian police and their debriefing after Egypt's Revolution had been taken into custody. The police probably literally beat it out of them.

Eventually they would go to trial; however, the trial would not actually take place until I had left the country not quite a year later. I will tell you as a parenthetical aside, the Egyptian Government wanted me to come back and testify, and I would only do so if they would give me diplomatic immunity and allow me to carry my gun there and *not* be protected by the Egyptian police. No one would agree to that, and I wouldn't go back to testify. They didn't need us. They had confessions. They didn't need our testimony and I knew that, but I had no intention of going back to Egypt to be protected by Egyptians. No disrespect intended to Egyptians. The folks we had protecting the embassy and the

ambassador were good, in part because we provided a lot of training to them. I did not have that same level of trust in the competence of the rest of the police.

As for Egypt's Revolution, they were taken off the street, they were finished. They had been funded by external foreign sources that would be identified later. Before they were taken down, they were extremely viable, extremely well-funded, extremely well organized, and really good at target identification planning. These were skill sets not generally developed in the Middle East, but these folks really had done it well. I don't recall if they were trained by an organization outside of Egypt. I don't recall that, but they were good and I had a lot of respect for their ability to carry off an operation. They did think it through quite carefully.

Okay, what have I failed to talk about on Egypt's Revolution? They're off the street. By the way, the embassy breathes a great sigh of relief to know they are off the street, they're not going to be attacking us, and I think that probably lets us all sleep a little better at night.

With the demise of Egypt's Revolution, with the riots just an historical memory for most of us, with the *Achille Lauro* a distant memory for many of us, things calmed down in Egypt. There were still high level visits. There were still congressional delegations. There was still Jimmy Carter coming, there was still Rosalynn Carter coming, and there was this and that or whatever, but there were no more violent episodes in my last year, my last ten months in Egypt. As the year progressed, the Marine ball in November, I was honored by the State Department with the award for valor. My friend and colleague and my supervisor Nick Baskey had put me in for it, unbeknownst to me, I think probably with the support of the ambassador and DCM, and things went calm. I went back to enjoy my last year of scuba diving. Chris got certified. Terri decided that she could stand it no longer and got certified. She no longer wanted to be on the sidelines babysitting everybody else's kids while they were out scuba diving. Things just went well... It was a very pleasant last year.

*Q: One of your sons would have graduated from high school there as well.*

WILLIAMS: Indeed. Two things happened. My wife graduated from American University in Cairo that year with her bachelor's degree in anthropology, and Chris [from high school] in one of the most dramatic venues possible, in front of the pyramids. Oh, that bring to mind another spectacle I think we also had that year, *Aida*. You were already gone; was that the year *Aida* came?

*Q: I think it probably was or it may have while we were there, but we missed it for whatever reason.*

WILLIAMS: We went to see *Aida* out at the pyramids. I don't think I've ever seen anything quite as dramatic as, first of all, the price of the tickets, and second, the production. The tickets twenty-something years ago were at the breathtaking price of something like \$200 apiece. But Terri and I decided this was a once in a lifetime event,

and we did go. I actually videotaped. Those were the old days before you couldn't videotape stuff. I actually videotaped much of the performance of *Aida*.

*Q: It was probably one of those old-style video cameras, about a foot long!*

WILLIAMS: It was my Panasonic camera, and I'm sure it was two feet long, Peter. It was this enormous piece of equipment that I dragged out to the pyramids with me. I know all those video tapes are somewhere. One of these days I'm going to transfer them all over to DVR. But in any event, we did go out to *Aida* and you can imagine how absolutely impressive it would be to see an historic performance using the pyramids and the Sphinx as the backdrop.

What I didn't know was that a few months later than that, my son would graduate from Cairo American College, which of course is the equivalent of a high school, out at the pyramids as well. I have to say having graduated from Freeport Senior High School in Freeport, Illinois in the gymnasium doesn't come anywhere near to graduating from Cairo American College, under the pyramids in Cairo with the Sphinx as a backdrop. That was impressive, and perhaps that impressiveness and the fact that he got a great education, and did well in Cairo is probably what got him to be accepted into Princeton, as well as Tufts, and where else did he go to? Oh, a bunch of schools. But Chris ultimately decided to go to Princeton, in no small part due to what happened in Cairo academically and the school itself.

We're now ready to go home. We've had a great three years. I'm going to miss the diving; I'm going to miss the adventures. I don't think any adventures were bad adventures even when they resulted in bullet holes. There's always something to be taken away from anything, and this has been no exception. We love Cairo. We loved Egypt. While we were there we did take the time to travel down the Nile, we did take the time to go to Luxor, to Karnak, if you remember Karnak, the Valley of the Kings, the Valley of the Queens, then on down to Aswan Dam. We did all of those things and to this day, I miss Cairo and miss Egypt. It was a fantastic experience, and I think we did everything we could to absorb as much of the culture and history as we could within the context of an extremely, extremely busy embassy. But we were ready to go home. It was the summer of 1988.

#### **Department of State, Director, Office of Professional Development**

*Q: You had decided it was time to go home rather than another overseas assignment?*

WILLIAMS: No, they had wanted me to come home. I'd been out for five years; I'd made senior Foreign Service in Cairo. DS was now really DS. It had transitioned from the office of security, the old SY, to this booming new bureau of diplomatic security, and they had a lot of needs. They had a lot of need for management and management expertise, and they really wanted me to come home and to be one of their senior managers. I think we were probably ready to go home at that point. After five years it

was time to get Chris into college in Princeton, and we I think we wanted to be back there for them, and it was time for Jeff to go into high school. It was time for...

Terri had a job in CLO. I forgot about that. She had flown back in early '88 and had applied for a job in the family liaison office, and it was to be the coordinator of all the CLOs overseas, literally the CLO coordinator, Community Liaison Office, in Terri's case the coordinator. So we were ready to come back.

I came back, and DS now as a bureau had offices, and at that point they had 10 offices or eight, not nearly what they have today. They asked me to take over the office of professional development. The office of professional development consisted of two components: the training center which was a training center... Sorry, this is going back a long time. Three divisions in the training center. I also had the mobile security division which was actually a... It served two functions. It was an operational arm, but when it wasn't conducting operations, protective operations, evacuations, whatever it was doing, it was a training unit, and so that's how it ended up under professional development.

*Q: That's the one we talked about a little while ago, about having agents come to Cairo to train people.*

WILLIAMS: Exactly. The mobile security division was our SWAT team and response team, as well as our trainers, our mobile trainers, literally. When they were not responding to some untoward event somewhere in the world, they were training people, and that's why I had them under me.

Now this is kind of a cool period of time. DS was growing a great deal. The office of professional development was located in Rosslyn when I got back to Washington, in an office building in Rosslyn. Right after I took over they said, "You know what? This isn't working. This training operation, MST, all these folks, are crammed into this little space. We need to go find a training center. Go do it." I said, "Okay. Will do," and I went to GSA. We rounded up a whole bunch of people. We said, "This is what we're looking for."

I will make a long story very short. In due course GSA, because we did have to use GSA services, came back to us and they said, "We have two choices for you. We have this wonderful stand-alone building in Dunn Loring, your own building, underground parking, blah blah blah, in this three building compound," and it took only a blind person to not see the potential of taking over the whole complex. "Or, we have this office building down here in Fairfax City, and we're going to give you two or three stories of this office building, and you can have that. And we really prefer that you take this office building because it's cheaper." I said, "No, no." I said, "Can you imagine what the other tenants of the building are going to think when they see all these agents running around drinking beer on Friday nights, peeing in the stairwells, hauling guns and explosive devices back and forth?" And he said, "Okay, you can have your stand-alone building." I said, "Thank you." I'm not kidding when I tell you that's exactly what I told GSA. I said, "You know you can't control those agents. It's all that Type A masculinity, all that

testosterone and all that other stuff. They're uncontrollable. They're uncontrollable. If you want us to be in that building and you don't think those other tenants will mind..." "No! We think the other tenants will mind."

*Q: So you got your own building or compound?*

WILLIAMS: Got my own building. Start with one building at a time. Got my own building, got to design my own building, got to put a 99 person auditorium into my own building, got more space than I knew what to do with, but it was terrific! We were expanding. My office was up on the third floor and a conference room right outside of my office, and we started putting together a first rate training operation. It was already there. I didn't invent this. It was just building on what others had already done. And we built.

We established core and class curricula for agents, for engineers, for all kinds of people that went through the training center, and you had to go through the training center. Agent training got better and better and better, and as State would have it, in 1989 and 1990 I, who had received little investigative training from diplomatic security in the State Department, my training had all come really from army military intelligence with several weeks of training in protection and firearms from DS and then SY. I got an opportunity as did all agents currently on board to go through the federal law enforcement training center in Georgia.

This is pretty unique when you figure I am now the senior Foreign Service guy in the class, and I was able to talk the director of diplomatic security then, Clark Dittmer, into letting me go to this training in Georgia, and it was by far the finest federal training I had ever received. Bar none. It was tough. It was tough training.

*Q: Was this a long course?*

WILLIAMS: It was an eight-week course, compressed to five weeks for us if you already had firearms training, protective training, and some other things. They didn't to repeat what you already had. It focused entirely on investigations, entirely on federal criminal investigations from beginning to end: how to do vehicle stops, how to do house searches, how to execute search warrants. You know, how to conduct investigations, how to handle evidence, all the way through your last week, your last two days in your last week when you sat in a courtroom with real attorneys and a real judge, and you're the witness. You were put under intensive fire. They videotaped everything, and then they graded you as to how you were as a federal law enforcement witness. It was very, very intense.

I remember at the end of my session, the prosecuting attorney, federal prosecuting attorney, who would have been my friend said, "I'll take him as my witness any time." It was really pretty intensive.

*Q: Was it particularly relevant to what you do as a DS agent?*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah! Entirely relevant. We do passport and visa fraud and false documents criminal investigations, so entirely relevant. Most of us had been doing it based on training we had received with some other agency and doing it fine, but this kind of put us all on the same piece of paper, and that was the change. It was consistency, a singular training program as opposed to this multiple approach, because we'd all been trained by other agencies.

*Q: Now, you had arranged for all DS people to go to this?*

WILLIAMS: All.

*Q: Of course.*

WILLIAMS: The five week course that I took was only for folks who had already received training somewhere else and had been on the job for some period of time with firearms and had other training. Push that aside.

For a brand new DS agent, this course was eight weeks long. It would shortly go to nine weeks. DS agents today, their training is approaching 30 weeks, and it's long, over half a year. It's really long.

*Q: Well, that's good.*

WILLIAMS: It's probably the best training in the federal government.

*Q: What were you...*

WILLIAMS: I have a great story to tell you first. Can I tell you a great story?

*Q: Sure.*

WILLIAMS: Somewhere in here I was sent off to a conference. The deputy of the diplomatic security service Clark Dittmer said, "You know, they're having this sort of federal law enforcement," show-and-tell really, which is what it was, "by border patrol down in El Paso, Texas." No, it was in San Diego. I'd been in El Paso for a different reason. There's something called EPIC in El Paso, El Paso Intelligence Center but no, this one was in San Diego. Border patrol was hosting people from all over the federal agencies, and there was somebody from Secret Service there, and there was somebody from customs, and there was somebody from FBI. In fact, the guy from FBI, the assistant director's name was Buck Revell, very famous in the FBI...very, very strong, hard-charging personality. Well known in the FBI at that particular time in the FBI's history. I should say the police chief for Park Police was down there, so there were probably 20 or 30 people, including somebody from Capitol Police. A whole bunch had gathered, and we were being hosted by border patrol.

What border police wanted to show us was how porous our borders were and how much trouble we're in. There's a certain irony in that considering that that was almost 20 years ago, and what they were saying to us was, "We can't control our borders. Come. Let us show you." From 8:00 in the morning until 12:00 at night we stayed with the border patrol, and by 10:00 at night people were streaming over the borders. It was unreal. It was scary beyond belief. At some point though, I had breakfast with Buck Revell, the FBI assistant director, and there were several others of us. At one point Buck Revell said to me, "Denny, you've got the training center. How long is the training for DS agents?" I said I think at that time it was 22 weeks. I said, "Oh, Buck, it's 22 weeks from beginning to end." He said, "Oh. Okay." I didn't think much more about it. You know, the light talk, banter continued.

I go back to Washington and about a week later I get this phone call. This person identifies himself as the director of the FBI academy at Quantico. Okay. I said, "How can I help you? What can I do for you?" He said, "Well, you met Assistant Director Buck Revell at the conference last week." I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, Mr. Revell told me that your training is 22 weeks, and we wanted to know why." I said, "Well, how long is FBI training?" He said, "Fourteen weeks." I said, "Well, it's easy." I said, "DS agents are slower." He didn't laugh!  
[laughter]

*Q: Wrong person to be trying to amuse. Of course DSA agents are slower than FBI agents!*

WILLIAMS: And he didn't laugh! There was like this 10 second pregnant pause and I said, "That was a joke. That was a joke! Hello? Fred?" whatever your name is, "That was a joke!" I said, "I suspect our training was longer, because we have defensive driver training, like you don't come near having. We have protective security training, which you don't do at all. We have way more extensive firearms training, because we are overseas with international firearms. I don't think you guys probably train on AK-47s and Swedish Case machine guns, but we do. There are a lot of things going on here that we do and you don't do."

Kind of the end of the story, but I never forgot. Oh! Yeah! DSA agents are slower! Of course...Duh!

In fact, one of the things I learned is that DS agents – and the State Department should be very proud of this – for typically, the number one and the number two graduating classes all the time, and this past year the number one graduate, *the* number one person graduated was a DS agent. DS does very well, in part because there are so many, many people competing for so few jobs, and that has not changed through today.

So anyway, back at the training center. We do get a new training center, and my last year, my last year was really setting it up, getting it functioning, getting courses on track, and being very proud of the accomplishments, or what we're all accomplishing out there... but I'm ready to move on.

*Q: This was a two year assignment?*

WILLIAMS: It was a two-year. I made it a two-year assignment. It was a two-year assignment, and I chose not to extend. This is in some ways on the personal level it had all the amenities. There was a gym out there, I had great staff, we were doing great things, but after I got the new training center, I wasn't finding it challenging enough anymore, so I had to move on.

*Q: This training center... First of all, all the DS agents were now training in Georgia as they came in?*

WILLIAMS: No. The way it works is when new agents come in, they actually do a week orientation at FSI. That was true back then. The training is actually split between three locations. It's split between the DS training station itself in Dunn Loring, some training that takes place in West Virginia, Bill Scott Raceway, where we teach driving skills, how to ram, things of that nature, and in Georgia at the Federal Law Enforcement Center. So the pieces, their component parts, weave in and out of each other. You spend several weeks at the DS training center, you may go out to Bill Scott Raceway and do... We also do some long shooting out there, I believe, but you did mostly the vehicles. The track's out there. Then you come back to the DS training center, then you go down to FLEC and spent your nine weeks at FLEC, then you come back to the DS training center.

*Q: Okay. And you were also coordinating courses for mid-level or in-service?*

WILLIAMS: In-service. We developed... We never had... Before it was in-service training courses, that is, recurring training for all agents, because laws change and skills are perishable. Weapons training and things like that, agents have to qualify every three to six months no matter what. That is just a given. Nobody has to tell them to do that. They do it. But in-service, when you bring agents back in for a week or two to teach them new federal laws, what things have changed, arrest techniques, changes in where you take people in DC jails. All of those things have to continue to happen, so recurring training started under us when we got the new training center. We established the new in-service courses.

We actually have... If you think about it, there are four core courses for agents, and one core course for security engineering officers. There's basic agent training, there's basic RSO training, there's in-service RSO training, which is less. If you've already been an RSO we don't have to start at the beginning. Then in-service agent training which applies to everybody, and that's recurring training.

There's a lot of training requirements. The engineers, there's the basic engineering training course, and once they take that, which is quite long, it's rare that they come back. I don't believe the engineering side has an in-service training program yet.

*Q: One thing you might clarify for me. You talked about agent training and RSO training as if they were two different things. For the layman, aren't the same people the agents and the RSOs?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, they are. In fact when you go overseas your credentials don't change and say RSO. You never change. Your credentials always say special agent. RSO training is much more... It takes a special agent, somebody's who's already had special agent training, and basic as you recall is quite extensive, 22 now up to almost 30 weeks. What it does then is take an agent with those agent skills, those law enforcement protective skills, protection skills, whatever, and helps them begin to transition for the somewhat different challenge of operating overseas. A regional security officer is part sheriff, but he's also part sociologist, manager, and mentor.

There's a whole number of skills that come into play, and it's beyond just a person who kicks in doors in Dade County and Miami looking for somebody on a fugitive warrant. Things have to change. Now you're looking for lost kids, and investigating Foreign Service nationals for visa fraud. It happens all the time. You're doing all kinds of things that many of your domestic skill sets and knowledge really don't adequately prepare you for. In the domestic world, you haven't had a lot of exposure to the CIA, you haven't had exposure to the NSA, the National Security Agency. You haven't had a lot of exposure to ambassadors and DCMs and political re-con centers and what are all these other folks doing overseas.

*Q: And does the training that agents get to be RSOs include area studies?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, it does.

*Q: Does it include which fork to use first?*

WILLIAMS: No. Unfortunately we don't... No. It does include language and area studies typically depending on what the assignment is, but that's true of anybody. I don't know when I learned which fork to use. My wife taught... It's not critical. What's it called? What is it called? ...I thought it was a protocol kind of course that she was teaching. She teaches protocol, but that really isn't about which knife or fork.

*Q: Diplomatic etiquette or something like that. I knew those kinds of courses exist within the State Department. I would think agents as well as anybody else would probably benefit from it.*

WILLIAMS: No, agents *more* than anybody else would benefit!

*Q: As I was saying! Okay, let's go back again. So, you were getting close to the end of your time in professional development.*

WILLIAMS: As you'll recall when we left the sequence, I was about to ask you about where political officers receive their etiquette training.

*Q: You know, it seems to me there was actually an hour or two that was given in the junior officer course when I joined, though I can't swear to that. Although political officers, as you know, being the crème de la crème within the embassies, pick these things up naturally.*

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: No, leave it there! *Crème de la crème* actually epitomizes my view of political officers' self-deception, which has been going on for decades, almost like the State Department's self-deception with every other agency! In that sense if I may, speak philosophically for just a moment, in fact the world has changed, and I think one of the things the State Department has had to come to grips with, and it's no longer a group of political officers that make a difference, political-economic officers, DS officers, CIA officers, it doesn't matter. Indeed, this has become a team sport overseas for both the benefit of the United States government and the United States people, for survival. It is much more of a team sport, where specialization has to be brought together and holistically, synergistically, the whole has to be greater than the sum of the parts.

*Q: It certainly should be, and I hope it is most places, but we've seen both pluses and minuses, both of us I'm sure, in the course of our careers.*

WILLIAMS: The reason I even say this is that for the longest time I could not see why the rest of the State Department could not clearly see that they should take this law enforcement and security arm called DS and use it to hold in abeyance the proliferation of every other federal law enforcement agency that wanted to have nice plushy places to send their folks overseas, and they couldn't see it for the longest time. I think they have now. We've had this incredible proliferation of people overseas, many of whom in law enforcement we don't need overseas. We don't even want them overseas, but now everybody's everywhere, and the State Department has become, as you know better than any, the hosts and the minority in overseas missions.

*Q: The minority in most missions at this point. That's true.*

WILLIAMS: In any event, by the time professional development was coming to an end, I had done the things I'd wanted done. I'd established a new training center, got new programs started.

*Q: This would have been in about the middle of 2000?*

WILLIAMS: No, the summer of 1990.

*Q: 1990. I'm just a decade off! I'm a political officer; we don't do math!*

WILLIAMS: That would be the econ officer!

*Q: Right.*

WILLIAMS: So in the summer of 2000 I get this phone call that says, "How would you like to go..."

*Q: 2000? 1990.*

**Department of State, Director, Physical Security Programs, DS**

WILLIAMS: Now I'm listening to you! In 1990 I decided to move. I didn't want to extend there. I really felt I had done everything that was significant that I needed to do and I probably needed to move on. I moved over to be the director of Physical Security Programs. It was actually a pretty big operation. We were the ones that...

Physical Security Programs, oversees and works hand in hand with the Office of Building Operations. At that point it was known as FBO, Foreign Building Operations, that builds our embassies overseas, all the physical and technical things that go into those buildings. That sounds more trivial than it is, because it's a major matter how we secure our missions overseas. Furthermore, at that particular moment in time, my office was writing the standards that are used today as to how we would secure and protect our embassies overseas. For example, the 100 foot standard, that is, a building may not be within 100 feet of the perimeter, called set-back, was a standard that emanated from one of the policy units back in the early 1990s. And we had to have walls that weren't climbable, that couldn't be breeched by vehicles. It goes on and on. A lot of people other than me, I wasn't doing this, but a lot of my colleagues that I was working with were developing these standards, so it would actually make people safer, but it would take a long time for all of this to come into place. I was director of physical programs, based in Rosslyn. I think I had three different divisions under me at that point in time, and it was a good job.

I had decided that it was probably time to start working on a Master's degree, and so I started that process while I was in Rosslyn as director of PSP. I don't think I had any real personal or professional challenges during that particular period of time. It was good work. It was significant work, and as it would happen, I would choose to stay a third year, because I liked what I was doing.

We were building an office there as well, but there were no particularly unique challenges that took place on either a personal or professional level. I was just going to work like anybody else in the Foreign Service in Washington, D.C. and coming to the realization... two realizations. One, we were downsizing government. I was an SFS-4, an FEOC SFS-4. I realized that, number one, I probably would never get promoted again, that I would never make MC, because at that particular moment in history, you may recall this too...

**[End Tape 5, side b]**

*Q: This is Tape 6, side a. Today is April 6, 2008. This is Peter Eicher continuing the interview with Dennis Williams.*

WILLIAMS: Okay, as I was saying, at that particular moment in time, the executive branch of government had made a decision to downsize the size of government, specifically the executive branch, and there was a paucity of positions, paucity Foreign Service, civil service promotions. For the Foreign Service it was devastating. Many of us got caught up. We could not get promoted, because there simply were no promotions...period! I know I was hardly alone getting caught up in that kind of stuff, and it would draw out for several years. I think I saw it coming. I think I saw the handwriting on the wall by the very early 1990s.

The other thing that became apparent to me, was I was never going to go back overseas again, that I was up against a TIC [time in class]. I had a seven year TIC since I was promoted in 1987, although I was commissioned in 1988, so I was going to be out in 1995. So, you start going into that kind of defensive strategy planning when you realize that there were events transpiring that were going to probably not work in your favor. I could see that back then.

*Q: And hence the beginning of the Master's degree.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, the beginning of the Master's degree. I looked around for a program that was not going to be so difficult. In PSP I was working a very normal job, but I was also.... At the very end, I knew I was going to be going from PSP, Physical Security Programs, and was going to become the Director of International Programs. That's the third senior position in DS, and I knew that as Director of International Programs I was going to get slammed in that that job. Because of everything that goes on overseas, it's a 24/7 job. You can never escape it. Then that summer I did transition, and as it would turn out, I ended up acting as deputy assistant secretary for, I don't know, several months, between jobs.

*Q: Before we get ahead to that, let me ask you a couple more things about PSP. Were you mainly dealing with the construction of new embassies or was this also programs for physical security in existing embassies?*

WILLIAMS: It was both. We had two different groups. We had the physical security division, and their job was to work directly with FBO/OBO to ensure we were meeting standards for new embassies. But we had a fund from FBO/OBO, which sounds like a pittance today. We had this million dollar fund from them that we could use to go back and correct some of the more egregious problems that we had around the world in physical security issues, whether that was just putting in power assisted vehicle barriers, or...it didn't matter what it was, new doors.

*Q: Was it just on the construction side? For example, if somebody wanted 10 armored vehicles, you were not the office that dealt with that, or were you?*

WILLIAMS: It was. That was another one of my divisions. I had a division that was physically located down at Newington and, strange as it seems, I had all the guns, all the vehicles, all those kind of things under me, so you'd have to come to me if you wanted an armored vehicle.

*Q: It was quite an empire in its own right...*

WILLIAMS: Oh, no, it was quite an empire. When you think of physical security you have to think of it in the broadest sense of the term all the way down to that car or that handgun.

*Q: Exactly. That's why I asked. I know that's an important thing and something we've talked about before in the context of Cairo and so forth. Would you have gotten involved in some of these building scandals that we heard about, for example, Embassy Moscow, where they had to take down 10 floors, because it was full of bugs [listening devices]?*

WILLIAMS: Ahhh... Peter, you bring up Moscow. It's a very interesting case. It's a case study of how not to build an embassy.

*Q: Indeed.*

WILLIAMS: Indeed. In the early '70s when agreements were made, of course this was pre-you and me, maybe not pre-you, but pre-me, a lot of concessions were made by then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to the Russians, in the rush by both sides, the Russians and the United States, to build new embassies. This was reciprocal in every sense.

Unfortunately, we didn't control the construction process in Moscow nearly as well as we should have. There were a lot of concessions on all sides just to get this done, in fact, probably too many. The Russians are very sophisticated when it comes to technical espionage. They're very, very sophisticated. They did things that... They threw diodes into the concrete mix. The concrete should have been mixed on site. They threw the diodes—diodes are bio metallic units—into the concrete mix. That would cause us to believe when that concrete dried that there were bugs in every wall in every location. It was absolutely brilliant on their part...truly brilliant!

They put things into our building that we couldn't even figure out. We weren't certain if they got office locations wrong and why they did some of the things they did, but we never really understood how they had compromised that building. I say this without going into great detail, some of which are probably still classified. They did compromise the U.S. embassy out there, and it caused us no end of problems.

*Q: While you were in this position?*

WILLIAMS: Much of this was taking place when I was in this position.

*Q: I imagine that was one of your big headaches.*

WILLIAMS: It was a huge headache. You know, the good news/bad news is that DS set the standards, but OBO implemented them, and so back then, as is today in Baghdad, OBO has people going after them with an ice pick. We set standards and they implement. They do the construction. We don't do the construction. The tendency of the State Department, not just OBO, the tendency of the State Department in the past has been to cut standards, cut corners, compromise, and do things that they really shouldn't do, and then we get ourselves in trouble and we wonder why.

The embassy in Moscow when it was completed was not inhabitable. It was compromised from bottom to top. The top floors of the embassy would have to be removed and they were, and a project called Top Hat was initiated to build new top, classified floors, the controlled access areas, with only cleared American workers doing the job. The concrete was mixed on site. Everything was done on site. Everything was controlled. DS had counterintelligence agents all over the place out there, and the building was completed, and the embassy in Moscow has now been occupied.

*Q: That's one well-known scandal. Were you running into that kind of thing in other embassies as they were constructed as well?*

WILLIAMS: No, not really. No, not really. There's a great... To bring us current today, there's a great deal of concern over the embassy in Beijing, but we don't have nearly the vulnerabilities we had back in Moscow in the early '90s. I suspect Beijing will be completed properly.

*Q: During your tenure – you were talking about the hundred foot setbacks – was this when we started the trend of moving away from prime downtown locations into big suburban fortresses, as some people would call them.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, ugly fortresses. Let's be perfectly honest, they really are. But you have to go out there and look and consider. How many embassies do we have to have blown up before we come to the realization that that maybe this isn't the way to protect our people? We've had a lot of experience now from Beirut to Dar-es-Salaam to what happened in Nairobi. I mean it just goes... It kind of goes on, and on and on, the incidents at one place, the next place, and the next.

I recently reviewed tape of what had happened...not tape, video, of what happened on an attack in Damascus. Damascus was well fortified. All the things we had into place and counter measures worked, and nobody got in. But we were attacked! Yet again! Our walls were street side, but our buildings were not. They followed a hundred foot setback, and they were far enough away. The hand grenades that were thrown in did no damage.

*Q: You can see the reason for it.*

WILLIAMS: And I have to tell you knowing a little bit about improvised explosive devices, I have to tell you that a hundred feet is a minimum. The correct answer as to how much setback we should have, the answer is all that you can get. You know, we never knew what happened in Dhahran. Maybe you remember in the mid '90s in Dhahran, a truck bomb that exploded where we had military staff stationed in Khobar Towers. Some estimates...

The bomb was extremely complicated. It was a large truck bomb, but it was complicated as to how it was put together. Estimates on how big an explosive device was used ranged from 5,000 to 20,000 pounds of TNT equivalency in terms of explosives. That's an enormous amount of explosives. If it were 20,000 pounds, the only reason it didn't knock the building down was there was something on top of the explosives, whether that was water or something else, something that was used to cover or hide the explosives that were below, so much of the blast was directed downward.

I went out to Dhahran, so I know what I'm talking about, the Khobar Towers. There was a 35 foot—think about this—a 35 foot hole created by that explosive charge, which meant primarily the explosive charge went downward rather than up and outward and spherically, which is why the building survived. That building was at 90 feet, not much less than our hundred feet. You see the point I'm trying to make here, so...

*Q: I see it.*

WILLIAMS: These standards that we set worldwide are minimum standards. The correct answer to the question to how much setback there should be, is as far back as you can get. The compromise in that, is that we build fortresses. We're starting to build fortresses. I don't like that either. I really don't like that either. I'm not proud of the fact that at this point in our history that's what we have to do, but that is indeed what we have to do.

*Q: It's understandable. You don't want to get your people killed.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, which is worse?

*Q: Exactly.*

WILLIAMS: Really, it's a compromise. Which is worse? When you get your people killed, the acrimony that resides, and the damage to families and to loved ones, it's irreparable! So I'm sorry, I'd rather inconvenience you and put you in the suburbs.

*Q: Three years in this position, busy getting us into suburbs. [laughter]*

WILLIAMS: Putting us in the suburbs, sending armored cars around the world, dealing with leaks; so I decided it's time to go. Then, in the interim, we've got a little bit of a problem. We've got a vacancy in the deputy assistant secretary for counter measures position. As the senior office director they put me in this position.

*Q: This was what year should we say?*

WILLIAMS: It was '92 to '93. I'm acting DAS for a few months. I don't know what a few means anymore, two, three, four months, until they can go find a new DAS.

**[Break]**

*Q: Today is April 13, 2008. This is Peter Eicher continuing the...*

WILLIAMS: And this is Dennis Williams, as you see.

*Q: Denny, I wanted to ask you a question in regard to your assignments back in Washington. You had been overseas for several years before you went back. Did you notice any big changes in DS in the time that you'd been away?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, huge changes...huge and significant changes. While I was gone from 1985 to 1988, it was probably the watershed period for DS, lately SY. Before I left for overseas, it had been the office of security, within the bureau of the administration. Really, when you think of it, just a lowly office headed up by a DAS, a DAS, not a principal DAS, and that was the entire SY organization...a DAS, an office, a bunch of divisions, and a bunch of branches.

When I came back this time around, DS had changed dramatically in the three-plus years that I had been gone. I mean truly dramatically. In 1986, I believe, DS became a bureau as by act of congress. Legislative authorities had been strengthened. Hiring had been approved. Of course, going from an office to a bureau is a significant change. We now had an assistant secretary, Bob Lamb. Bob Lamb... Robert Lamb. Bob had been out as, I think, as an admin counselor, minister counselor. He was a very good guy...he was a very good guy to work with. DS did very well by him.

Bob had brought a whole lot of other people in that he had known over the years to work within DS, mostly Foreign Service admin types all of whom I must say, you know. Dick Shinnick was there and a few others did a very good job; they did quite right by DS. I think the most significant difference was that the structure was completely different. It was a structure unknown to me when I left, although I could see it evolving from afar. Until you're back into it, you just don't know. When I came back in 1988, I was first put in the position of being the... the Office Director for PLD (Professional Development).

*Q: Right. We did talk about your job there, then your subsequent job in training, right?*

WILLIAMS: It's the same thing. The other point I'm really making here, though, is all of a sudden this new land, this strange land, has all of these kinds of offices, and they have office directors, and there are senior Foreign Service positions, and we really had very little of this before. From the Office of Professional Development, I would go on to take over the Office of Physical Security Programs. I think we touched on that the last time as well.

But there were about 12 offices in DS, all fairly significant: The Office of Counter Intelligence, the Office of Protection. These were just things that hadn't really effectively existed before I left. The Office of Overseas Programs would change names to become Office of International Programs, now today the International Programs Directorate. There had been a lot of changes. There were a lot more faces, a lot newer facilities. We had a complete training center in Rosslyn that was new to me. We had offices in SA3, across the street from the State Department, across Virginia Avenue, and that's where DS's headquarters was. Just to think about it, it had its own headquarters now.

Now, the Assistant Secretary never did change locations. The Assistant Secretary remained at the Harry S Truman building and would continue to do so. I think for good reason, you wanted the Assistant Secretary there, so that part of DS would remain there and does to this day.

But everything else was starting to be scattered all over. We had operations down in Newington, Virginia. We had operations, as I said in Rosslyn. Things were much different, much bigger.

*Q: Wasn't that kind of a mess to have different offices all over the place?*

WILLIAMS: Well, some of it was unavoidable. The offices down in Newington, for example. We were now in the armored business, literally procuring armored vehicles as well as procuring follow vehicles and things for overseas, and literally arming those vehicles, so you had essentially a warehousing operation, plus a storage operation.

*Q: State was doing that for itself? It wasn't contracting out the construction of armored vehicles?*

WILLIAMS: Both. It was doing both. Fully armored vehicles are always contracted out. That requires a great degree of professional skill, and the car is literally taken apart. However, you can buy lightly armored vehicles too, from the factory. O'Gara-Hesse and Eisenhardt back then, was the company if I recall correctly, in Ohio and in California, who built our armored vehicles for us.

As a parenthetical aside, O'Gara-Hess and Eisenhardt built stretch limousines out on the west coast...pimp mobiles. When I had been out there for the Olympics in 1984, I had gotten a tour of the factory out there. Now they were in the armored car business and did pretty decent vehicles.

In addition to the armored vehicles, we bought factory armored, if you will, from O'Gara- Hess and Eisenhardt, and there were other companies. Chicago Bullet Proof comes to mind. We also did our own armoring, light armoring. We had Seabees doing it down at Newington, again in this kind of warehouse setting. They would take Suburbans and other cars and would install the light armoring in the cars. Typically, what does light armoring mean? Inquiring minds want to know what light armoring means. Light

armoring means aluminum, quarter inch aluminum in the doors, and it means half to three quarter inch Lexan, Lexguard, some similar polycarbonate bolted in behind the windows. This actually can be done overseas, too. There were kits that would allow us to fly teams into a country and lightly armor the vehicles in the country.

*Q: This basically stops a bullet?*

WILLIAMS: It stops some bullets, okay? It stops typical .38 caliber and nine millimeter bullets. I don't have a clear recollection. I know it will not stop any armor-piercing bullets...none whatsoever. I'm not sure it will stop AK rounds effectively. That would be 7.62 millimeter rounds, and I'm not sure it will even stop an M-16 round, which is 5.56 millimeters. I don't know. I just don't remember. My suspicion is they won't stop heavy rifle rated rounds, but it will stop the kinds of stuff we find a lot of, which are nine millimeter overseas. It's better than nothing, but not a whole lot better than nothing.

The FAVs, the Fully Armored Vehicles, the things the Ambassador would ride in, the Secretary rides in here in town, the President, whatever. These are significantly armored vehicles that will stop virtually any handgun, and will (probably) stop armor-piercing rounds as well. You can never be sure about that. Armor-piercing rounds are nasty rounds, because they're steel jacketed, and some of them can come with uranium tips.

*Q: We've digressed a little bit from DS. Did you feel at this point that DS was starting to get the respect it deserved within the State Department?*

WILLIAMS: No. Not really. I think in the State Department, from a DS point of view, there was good news, there was bad news. In 1988 there was a lot of activity; Bob Lamb, a new Assistant Secretary; there was a lot of dynamic growth; there were a lot of people trying to do the right thing and make things better; there was money; there was support. I think it's only been very recently that the State Department has finally figured out that it has a police organization itself, and it could use it throughout the world and can use it effectively.

For the most, part I truly believe there has always been a love-hate relationship with the rest of the State Department. DS is resented, because DS gets money, and it has gotten money over the years; it's gotten more and more and more money. It's gotten positions. At that particular moment in history in the late 1980s, just before the 1990s, DS was on a growth spurt, but I didn't really see a lot of change in the way the rest of the department viewed DS at all. I hate to say that. I saw a lot of change in our relationships with the Secret Service and the FBI and others, in fact, because DS was a professionalized organization. It was much better than it had been in, let's say, the late '60s or early '70s, when it truly was a bunch of knuckle draggers.

We've been in kind of a transition, and the transition probably started in the late 80's for the State Department. Then, in the early '90s... You know, I moved from Professional Development. We talked a little about that. We moved over to Physical Security programs, but...

*Q: We went through that one as well, but go ahead.*

WILLIAMS: We did, but the point I was trying to make is that I saw the same kind of political decisions made then, as had been made for decades. That is when security clashed with the politics of the building wanted, and the politics won. So if you go to Ottawa, I may have mentioned last time, if you go to Ottawa, the embassy's built right on the street in Ottawa.

*Q: A new embassy.*

WILLIAMS: A new embassy that was being built in the early 1980's. The embassy in Ottawa was built in the early 1980s, and we on the DS side of the house declined to approve its location. It did not meet our own standard of a hundred foot setback. It was going to be built right on the street, because it was right across the street from the Parliament on this beautiful piece of property, and they wanted it to be right across the street from the Parliament. We said, "Nooo, we have standards now, given all the bombings and issues that we've had." The long story here... the short version, is that the building won. The political side of the house in the form of Tony Quainton, five-time ambassador Tony Quainton, who was now the Assistant Secretary for DS, signed the waiver. So we now have an embassy sitting on the street in Ottawa, that one of these days will have to be put on the replace list, because it absolutely has the maximum vulnerability, and the maximum vulnerability is always location, location, location! You know? If you haven't looked in Canada lately or walked the streets of Montreal, there are a lot of foreign nationals up there.

In any event...

*Q: That's a big policy issue. Did you have any further sense that you were blocked by politics, or that you were somehow second class citizens among the high falutin' diplomats or anything like that?*

WILLIAMS: I think it was much better than it had been. I think the reality was that within the State Department, DS, simply because it was starting to be that 8,000 pound gorilla, was getting hard to ignore. I think there was resentment, but there was probably more respect as well. I had seen that change in the time that I was in Cairo, from the time I'd been out before. I was, as I think you know because you were there with me, I was sitting at the table with most of the big kids most of the time on all issues. So things had changed, and they had changed back here in Washington, too. I don't think we were... I think the political side was still *primus inter pares*. It was still the first among equals. I guess that's kind of understandable.

What always bothered me though is that no one in State could grasp the obvious, and that's why don't we use DS to further the aims of Department of State? Why don't we say, "No, FBI, you can't extend your field office out there; we already have a law enforcement agency out there; send your request to us." Instead, all these agencies have

proliferated only for the joy of having people stationed overseas, most of whom don't have a clue what they're doing in foreign environments, most of whom are lost.

Had things changed for the better? Of course. Of course they had. Was there still the second class citizen phenomenon? A little bit. Some of it, yes, I think there was, but it's only because the main mission of the State Department is not law enforcement or security, nor should it be.

*Q: Sure. As DS improved its professionalism, as you described, and there were more and more attacks on embassies and diplomats, I guess it would be normal that people would start coming to DS more and more, and looking for advice as well as taking advice more and more.*

WILLIAMS: You know, too, in the complexity of the embassy, we could easily see were changing dramatically. Fifty years ago, and you know more than anyone, you were a political officer...fifty, sixty, seventy years ago the ascendant sections in an embassy were probably the econ and political sections. They were significant players and understandably so, in the life of a mission. And they were important players. But in today's world, the complexities, technological complexities, all the things that are going on from the environment to commercial to cultural exchanges, on and on and on and on... scientific, technical, law enforcement, and terrorism. I think what we have are embassies that... Well, first of all, you know as well as I do, that the State Department is a small minority of the players in an embassy now.

*Q: Yes.*

WILLIAMS: I think the idea that somehow the political and econ sections were the most important sections of the embassy; I think that's faded a little bit, too, as it would with so many other players that are sitting at the table...important players. And when you have some kind of scientific, nuclear exchange going on in a country, that's nothing to snivel at! When you've got the DS side of the house dealing with the host police, trying to hunt down wanted terrorists in the country, that's nothing to snivel at. The point is, everybody makes a substantive contribution to the overall success of our Foreign Service missions. It's no longer just the political section or just the econ section or just DS or just AID or just the military. I think it really is a synergistic contribution by all the significant players, and as a consequence I can understand why you still have somebody to be the overall manager, but when you no longer hold the majority of departments in the place, if I can use a weak metaphor here, when you come to that table and you're only 25% of that post, you don't quite have the clout and the vote that you might have had in years gone by.

#### **Department of State, Director of International Programs, DS**

*Q: That's clear, except in most cases the ambassador would still be State Department, although there are a lot of political ambassadors that might not have that loyalty. Let me take you back to 1992, I think it was, and you were just appointed as acting DAS. Let's*

*talk a little about what that assignment was and how long you were there and what you did.*

WILLIAMS: As I said, I think I was there about two or three months. There was a search on. There was a little bit of resentment on my part, that I may have mentioned before, and that is, word came out from the under secretary for management that they were to find a black DAS. When you're a white guy you can't help but resent that. It wasn't "Find me the most competent and qualified person," it was "Find me a black guy that we could put in this position."

*Q: You were probably among the most senior DS agents at the time.*

WILLIAMS: I was. As it would turn out, and names are not important in this particular case, but they would find somebody who was subordinate to me and whom I had inspected recently on a senior inspection trip. But it is what it is. It's the world you live in, and you just get over it and move on.

It was kind of fun being DAS. It was fun, because on more than one occasion I ended up being Acting Assistant Secretary, simply because people take vacations, and they're not there. I used to remember sitting at the Deputy Secretary's meetings and thought, "That's kind of cool! That's pretty cool!" Once you've sat at that level with other assistant secretaries, even though you were just the acting "shmuck", it was kind of cool. I can see how people can easily get addicted to a certain level of power and prestige.

I did spend a lot of time as acting Director of DS, because I was only one step away from that, and it was fun. Ultimately, it would come to an end. It wasn't that long. There were no crises during my short tenure as acting DAS. Life went on as usual. You do know it, of course, I know this as well as you do. When you are a DAS, the higher up you are in seniority the more authority, real or apparent, you have. You can get things done, and you can get things done for the better. I think that's one of the benefits of being in a power position, but actually the position I would actually go into, the Director of Overseas Programs, which is now National Programs, was the third senior position in DS, and it really was a power position as well. I'm ready to transition over to that if you are.

*Q: To make clear the hierarchy then, there was the Assistant Secretary and how many DASs?*

WILLIAMS: There were two at the time.

*Q: Okay, and then your office directorship in office of programs would have been the next highest level under that.*

WILLIAMS: It was. Actually that office directorship in International Programs was the only MC office director position in DS.

*Q: So what was this office? What did it do?*

WILLIAMS: Well, let me back up to the second DAS. There were... There was a principal DAS, and there were two other subordinate DASs, one of which was a political position, which was literally created to put some White House flunky in there. That was a little unfair, because he was a nice guy, but he had no clue, no clue about anything.

*Q: This was probably about the time – I can't remember which administration it was; it could as easily have been either Republicans or Democrats – when all bureaus were, "directed" would be the right word...*

WILLIAMS: Subjective.

*Q: They were all somehow required to have one...*

WILLIAMS: Political DAS.

*Q: ...political DAS. Yes, I remember that very...*

WILLIAMS: Unreal! And this 30-something year old kid calls me into his office, and you know, first of all I'm just tolerant. That's all I'm doing. I'm just tolerant. I have no respect, and I have no patience, and he says, "I want you to come work for me." I looked at him and started laughing, and I said, "I want you to come work for me! I'm not coming to work for you! You don't know anything!"

*Q: You put it in those terms, I hope?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, pretty much so. He was a nice enough guy. I said, "Look," Tom or Jerry or whatever his name is, "I'm sorry." I said, "I appreciate what you're doing here is giving me a compliment, but there's no way I intend to come work for you. Okay?"

*Q: Was he offering you another office under him, is that it?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, yes.

*Q: But you already had a different office somewhere else.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. This may have happened before I had the assignment to the Office of International Programs. It doesn't matter. I didn't realize the rest of the department had been subjected to the political DAS phenomenon. It had been...

*Q: At one point it certainly was. I can't remember whether that was 1992 or some other point, but it certainly had been sometime in the mid-'90s.*

WILLIAMS: Well, let me ask you a question. How many DASs are there in EUR?

*Q: I don't know the answer for that, but I would assume there are four or five.*

WILLIAMS: Um humm. How many DASs are there in DS today?

*Q: I have no idea. Three, if I read your fingers right.*

WILLIAMS: [laughter]...And one is really OFM, the Office of Foreign Missions that we inherited. OFM was appended to DS, and coming with that annexation was a DAS position. Most of it is history of DS... Since 1960 DS has had two DAS positions. Now it's got a third, only because OFM, Office of Foreign Missions has been appended. Think about this. The largest, biggest bureau in the Department of State has struggled with two DASs. Now it has three. Anyway...DS is now the biggest bureau now by far. By far.

*Q: Okay.*

WILLIAMS: How many people work for DS? About 35,000.

*Q: Thirty five thousand! I didn't think there were that many in the State Department. So we really do have the tail wagging the dog now!*

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah!

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: Our DAS really is the 8,000 pound gorilla now. I don't know what its budget is. Half a billion? A billion? I'm not even sure. It's almost out of control.

*Q: Sounds like it.*

WILLIAMS: Anyway, well let's come back to things. DS, back then, really had only two real DAS positions and had this political DAS, a make-believe DAS. They gave him a few things to do and most part people just ignored him. He'd say something, and everybody'd ignore him...pathetic, truthfully...just pathetic.

IP was the third senior professional position within DS. Because it was the only MC position, the IP director's a major player within DS as you can imagine.

*Q: IP is the...*

WILLIAMS: International Programs.

*Q: That's the job you had that you were talking about.*

WILLIAMS: Exactly. Below the two DAS positions, was a level that was now evolving to be an Assistant Director position. That was one of them. IP was an Assistant Director position, meaning literally assistant to the Director of Diplomatic Security Service.

*Q: Who was also the assistant secretary?*

WILLIAMS: No, the PDAS, the principal DAS. The assistant secretary sat really above the entire structure, and because that was often or heretofore had been a political appointee, didn't count as part of the Diplomatic Security Service structure. Kind of like the director of FBI reports in theory to an undersecretary, I think, at the Department of Justice, because the FBI is a bureau; people forget that all the time. It's just a bureau.

*Q: You're right, yes.*

WILLIAMS: Then there's the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms bureau, which reports to an undersecretary. Now all of that has changed with Homeland Security, but in fact that political person on top, the Assistant Secretary, doesn't count in the structure. DS is a bureau, and it is starting to set itself up like other law enforcement agencies, like the Secret Service and the FBI. It has a director, may have a deputy director, and it has assistant directors who run major component operations. In my case, every RSO overseas worked for me. Now it's that dotted line relationship, because he gets an EER from the DCM. Strangely enough, DS officers—I think you probably know this—are strangely loyal to DS as an organization. Not strangely. They are. They identify with...

*Q: It's a permanent home bureau, unlike other officers, who would switch from bureau to bureau.*

WILLIAMS: That's right. It is a permanent home bureau, and your entire assignment, your entire career, your entire professional life, is controlled by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security. They assign you your next position, so with that kind of hold on the RSOs the director of IP... You know, I had pretty good hold as you can imagine, because they literally would often depend on what I said at the assignments board. If I said no, they didn't go there, because the rest of the board would defer to the Director of International Programs. After all, they work for him or her. Today it's a "her," by the way. So anyway, it is a powerhouse position. It really is a powerhouse position, with just three or four others.

I would meet every morning with the Assistant Secretary. Two or three of us would meet every morning with the Assistant Secretary: the Director of the Diplomatic Security Service (at that time it was Mark Mulvey); me, as the director of International Programs; and the office director for threat analysis, actually called Intelligence and Threat Analysis. So the Director of International Programs person, an intelligence and threat person, and the Assistant Secretary, and the four of us would meet every morning. I was trying to think if there was somebody representing the domestic side of the house, and there had to be, and it's just evading me who that was at that time.

*Q: Would the DASs be there?*

WILLIAMS: Well, the Director of the Diplomatic security service was a DAS.

*Q: Was the other DAS there? Maybe so, because you said he was talking and nobody would pay any attention. [laughter]*

WILLIAMS: I don't remember... We actually had a name for him. We called him our baby DAS. [laughter] We often just didn't tell our baby DAS when we were having meetings. I mean, he really didn't count. He really didn't count, and when he got very far out of line, we'd just slap the hell out of him, push him back. "Just sit in the corner and shut up, John. If we want your opinion we'll ask for it."

I don't think the baby DAS attended. I think the... It was the Assistant Secretary's meeting, so he would invite who he wanted. It wasn't a staff meeting. It was our daily... We called it our daily threat assessment meeting, but it was just that 10 or 15 or 20 minutes in the morning, about what has happened in the world overnight. The Director of the Diplomatic Security Service brought the domestic side, if there was something that happened domestically. I brought the overseas side, if something had happened overseas. We'd spend that 10 or 15 or 20 minutes just going over what was happening in the world, what had happened to our posts overnight, what has happening domestically, if anything, and we'd break up. That wasn't a staff meeting, it was just the daily meeting we had every day with the assistant secretary. Tony Quainton was the assistant secretary.

*Q: That must have been fascinating, because whatever was on the front page of the newspaper would be affecting your security officers, and that's what you were dealing with.*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. It was fascinating, and you know, some days there was nothing, other days you had stuff happening everywhere. In that position you're seeing everything. You're seeing all the intelligence reports. You're seeing everything from everybody. You really are. It was fun. Tony Quainton. How would I describe him? Is this a good point to characterize the ambassador and assistant secretary?

*Q: As you wish.*

WILLIAMS: Actually I liked Tony Quainton very much. Tony Quainton, as I said, was a five-time ambassador, very smart guy...very, very intellectually bright. He was very quick. Twinkle in his eye, great sense of humor, but he came with his ideas of what DS should be, not necessarily what it was evolving to be, but what it should be. What he believed was that it should be the tail, and it should not wag the dog. So Tony Quainton came with what was, in his mind, a mandate. I say this, it sounds so pejorative, with a mandate to keep DS in its place and at the right size. He looked at this not as some evil act, but rather this was to be the order of things. This was the natural order of things in the State Department. DS should simply keep its place.

While I didn't agree with that judgment or that position, I respected him on a kind of personal level. I took the time to see what he was thinking, to try to figure out what he was thinking. This was not an evil man. This was not somebody I didn't like on a personal level, and Terri and I would end up having dinner at his house on Saturday

nights, and he would end up trying to get me promoted like no one else in the Department, so that he could make me director of the Diplomatic Security Service, which I always thought was interesting.

But for me, I was in an awful position at the time, an almost untenable position. The Director of the Diplomatic Security Service, Mark Mulvey, and Assistant Secretary Tony Quainton, often did not see eye to eye on many things in the meetings in the morning, and so they would turn to the third person, and I was caught right in the middle constantly between both of them. So if I sided with one – and I always followed my own conscience as to what I believed was correct – then the other wouldn't speak to me.

*Q: Not that anybody was petty!*

WILLIAMS: No, no, no! When Tony was pissed at me he gave me the silent treatment. When Mark was pissed I'd get the silent treatment from him, and sometimes I pissed them both off and then neither would talk to me. No, no pettiness. No pettiness. It seems to me it was like living in la-la land. It was almost like every morning you'd see this bing! Bing! Bing, bing! and then they're looking at me and I'm thinking, "Oh, crap, here we go again." "Well, Denny, what do you think?" Oh, I'm screwed. And there was a lot of that. There was a lot of that, because Tony and Mark, two well-meaning and well intentioned gentlemen, just did not see things similarly at all. They often saw things completely differently.

*Q: And one issue where this might have happened would have been security of an embassy or something like that?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely.

*Q: Or you mentioned the building an embassy.*

WILLIAMS: Out in Ottawa. Absolutely. I would argue with Tony against that, trying to point out that we repeated history over and over, that we had our missions blown up, we have standards, we put standards...we got standards passed by the intelligence committee, that they agreed with these standards. Why do we want to undermine what we collectively believe was a good start in rectifying the inherent vulnerabilities of our missions overseas, the biggest of which is its location? You can't armor a building enough, unless you just build a concrete block, from a large vehicle-borne bomb when it pulls up next to your building. You just can't.

*Q: Tony, as a five-time Ambassador, as you said, would like a friendly embassy in a nice location, and presumably he was under a lot of pressure from the Ambassador in Ottawa and the assistant secretary in the EUR and maybe the secretary of state!*

WILLIAMS: And maybe the undersecretary secretary for political affairs...absolutely. And he believed, and this is where, and I say this with absolutely no rancor, he believed that part of his mission was to put DS back on the right track and to recognize some of

the political realities that we should see. Sometimes you did things like this because it was the right thing to do. I don't disagree with that thinking. I mean I do understand. I'm smart enough to understand the politics of the situation.

*Q: Isn't there a sense sometimes – I know I found that among the political officers – that you can't do this or you can't do that, because DS won't let you.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Yeah. And of course that's... First of all, a lot of things are attributed to DS that are not even true, and second of all, that takes me to one of my own pet peeves and that is we've got way too many DS officers who were perhaps hired because of their résumé with the local law enforcement and weren't necessarily...

**[End Tape 6a]**

*Q: This is tape 6b. Today is April 13, 2006. (Transcriptionist's note: 2008) Dennis Williams was just talking about hires.*

WILLIAMS: What we were talking about is that there's a perception within the State Department that the job of DS agents or RSOs or whatever, is to tell folks no, and I think that's unfortunate that that's the perception. I think there's probably a lot of truth in it, because I think a lot of people in security believe their job is to start with the word no. When I had...

It's a hard thing to change organizationally, and let me do a parenthetical aside. When we got new people in Cairo, I'd pull them in my office, and I'd say, "There are a couple of things, there are a couple of rules here you're going to obey. One is we never cancel violations. If the violation is valid we never cancel it. We will never, ever be accused of favoritism," and I said, "If you get a violation, you, my RSO buddy, get a violation. End of story. Don't come whining to me, because I won't cancel them. I won't cancel my own." I said, "That's the absolute iron clad rule here. There's no favoritism.

Number two, when somebody walks into your office to discuss a problem, you get up from behind your desk, you go around, and you sit down in a chair next to him. You're talking to him as an equal, and they're talking to you as an equal. It's a sign of respect.

And number three, don't ever start with the word no. Listen to what their problem is, and even if the answer is going to be no, because for whatever reason it can't be done, try to work out some sort of compromise solution so at least they walk out feeling like it's been a win-win situation. Often it isn't, and sometimes you can't change things that are. Regulations cannot be waived by DS officers overseas, so... But I wanted an attitude of customer service and helping people, and when we have to be tough, the other end of the spectrum when we have to put people in handcuffs, we do that, too. But it's important to listen and try, so that when we tell somebody no, they'll believe us because we've already shown that we'll go to the extra effort to try to get to yes."

*Q: So maybe that's what Tony was doing on a lot of these issues on a larger scale.*

WILLIAMS: It may have been, and he had to live in his own political world, and I actually understood that. It doesn't mean I have to agree with his decisions, but I understood where he was coming from. He was part of the greater Foreign Service of the world. He loved the Foreign Service, it was his life, it had been good to him. I'd not had bad experiences DS officers, but he believed that DS was—and I believed he was right—was not the... DS should not be controlling everything that the State Department does, and I happen to agree with that too. I believe it has to be an equal player, and I wasn't sure we had even gotten entirely to be that equal player, but once we were an equal player, then there were a lot of other players whose equities have to be taken into consideration, and I did understand that.

*Q: Does he announce this as his mission, or did you just gather it because of his actions as he went along?*

WILLIAMS: Well, he didn't announce it as his mission. It just became clear in his actions. But then I used to like to tell people, and this phrase I've told people over and over, time after time, so this is not coming out uniquely here today. "In the absence of political considerations, Ambassador Tony Quainton would try to do the right thing," and that was one of the reasons I did respect him. If he went another way and I could clearly see the political reasons, the undersecretary for management was all over him and told him that he was going that way, or somebody else or the political guy was all over him. He would go kind of their way, but if there were no political considerations, Tony Quainton would try to do the right thing. So I understood him. I really did understand him, and we really did kind of like each other even though he would piss me off, and I would tell him. If I told him too loudly in front of too many people, then he wouldn't talk to me for two or three days.

*Q: Everybody, like you said, hopes they're on the same team, and a lot of times the policy decisions would be things DS would support in any case, and the things DS wanted would be things the policy makers would support.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, and there was a lot of that, too. Let's face it. The world had changed. The Department was beginning to recognize that it really did need DS, but then something bad started happening in 1992, and you recall it too. You and I were both caught up in it, Peter. Hiring got frozen. The Department of state went to sleep. There were no promotions. There were no new hires. We weren't even hiring through attrition. We were barely able to fill our positions overseas, barely able to fill our positions domestically. In fact in many cases we simply weren't filling them.

For the first time probably by 1995, the agent strength dropped by below 600 agents worldwide. That's horrible! Just to give you some sense, we're about 1,500 agents today, probably going up to about 1,800 in the next couple of years. Things got really, really bad. Tony Quainton, Tony and I... Tony and I really did like each other. We really did although I didn't agree with him on a lot of things...on kind of the human level. I

respected his intellect. He was a very, very bright man, very articulate man, and he did, I must say to be fair, he did everything he could to get me promoted. Everything he could do, but like others, I was right there on the edge waiting for my MC, and there were no MC promotions at all during the entire time I was eligible. You remember those days, Peter.

*Q: I remember them well. Oh, yes.*

WILLIAMS: Miserable days...miserable days not just for many of us personally.

*Q: It wasn't just DS. It was worldwide.*

WILLIAMS: It wasn't just DS. It was horrible, and Tony wrote me probably the best EERs I've ever had. He clearly wanted... He wanted to make me director of the Diplomatic Security Service, because his... I don't think his relationship with the director he had chosen... I think he came to think at some point that maybe he had made a mistake. In any event, that was not to be, but...

Anyway, there were a lot of things going on during that period of time, and we might as well talk a little bit about Haiti.

*Q: If that was one of the big issues, it's a good thing to talk about.*

WILLIAMS: That was one of the big issues. Back then we were involved with a lot of covert stuff, too. We were using—got to choose my words carefully here—a lot of special military units around the world to help supplement our folks. Some of those special units do or do not exist; you've read about them fictional books.

*Q: "We" being DS.*

WILLIAMS: Yes. Certainly, the Army is unique and in the lead with groups such as Delta, which everybody has heard of. Then there were some CL teams as well, which we had been using, kind of using, around the world. These were supplementing, kind of, the paucity of DS agents overseas. And, I must say, in many cases and in really, really high threat environments, some of these unique military organizations bring skill sets that we just can't possibly possess because all they do every day is train and train and train. I'll be even more specific. They have long range shooting skills that none of the rest of us could possibly emulate.

They wanted to play. They wanted to participate with us, and we would bring them overseas under DS cover and use them in various missions. I spent a lot of time on the road down to those parts of the U.S., down to SOCOM in Tampa, Florida. SOCOM is the Special Operations Command down in Tampa, and I was down in Fort Bragg and other places, Virginia Beach. I was working a lot on our relations with the military.

During this period of time as well...

*Q: Ummm, is that true?*

WILLIAMS: No, I think actually I was doing that when I was at professional development. We had ambassadorial classes for five days. What I can't remember was when we ran out of money to do that, but I'm sure it was some time in the early '90s. We were taking ambassadors on five day programs, typically down to Georgia, to Brunswick, Georgia, and for five days down there we hosted them and really indoctrinated them: "This is DS. This is the Special Operations Command. This is how they fit in the larger picture. This is the Marine Corps. This is how Marines fit into your world." It was really a great, great program, and I think it's all gone by the wayside, because it was very expensive.

In any event, during the time I was in IP we were doing a lot of relationship-building with military units, military organizations. I set up... I did a couple of things. When I went to IP, I literally pulled out of my previous organization, the Office of Physical Programs, I pulled the Marine Security Guard program right out of there and took it with me to International Programs, because that's where it belonged.

*Q: It sounds like it would. If you were controlling RSOs and not controlling their subordinates, that would be a little odd.*

WILLIAMS: Eventually—and I didn't do it—the local guard program that was also part of physical security programs would be pulled out and brought over to International Programs. I set up a branch, probably a branch, maybe a division, of Special Operations and had the first guy who was a former Special Operations guy to become a DS agent. We set up his, let's just say it was a branch or section or whatever it was, essentially to work just with the military, the Special Operations units of the military that we were working with. For the first time DS had this kind of ongoing working relationship with folks who spoke the same language, and we slowly built up his staff so there were two or three people working in the Special Operations unit, and eventually it would be established as a branch. Now it's big time. It's one of the bigger units, divisions, within International Programs, because we've had so many different relationships with all kinds of units, all over the U.S. You know, let's face it, we can't distance ourselves too far from the military, especially in today's world. We do have to work issues with them.

*Q: What kind of issues would you work with them, for example?*

WILLIAMS: Okay. Getting people to go to various places for us, to supplement our offices; getting folks to go with our mobile security deployment teams; providing people to help DS agents to work with Marines, for example, to help do the mock embassies. We would play the roles of ambassadors and DCMs and RSOs to give Marines just a flavor of what it was actually like overseas to work with Foreign Service people. Those kinds of exchanges.

As would shortly happen, I needed to go to Haiti and I needed a C-130 airplane. Now, I had an old buddy from Delta [Force], a colonel in Delta, Jerry, and I'll have to work on his last name – Boykin – who'd made a one-star general. They brought him from Delta down at Fort Bragg, and they brought him up to the Pentagon and put him in an office with a kind of Special Operations coordination mandate and made him the chief coordinator.

*Q: Why would you need a C-130 to go there, to Haiti? Were you taking a lot of luggage with you?*

WILLIAMS: And some of my friends. We were going to do ClubMed right down there on the western coast. You've probably been to ClubMed. Actually, there is a ClubMed down there!

*Q: I expect there probably would be. But now we're talking about Haiti in 1992?*

WILLIAMS: September 1994. We're well beyond '92.

*Q: Was this was the anti-Aristide time? Or was this after Aristide was ousted?*

WILLIAMS: No, we're taking Aristide back.

*Q: Oh, okay. This was after the UN reinstated him?*

WILLIAMS: Absolutely. This little country called Haiti, which hasn't had a democracy since 1803 but a series of thugs of some flavor. I think that's pretty much literally true. I did some research and somehow 1802 or 1803 stuck in my mind. It's been a dictatorship ever since through. Papa Doc. Do you remember Papa Doc and Baby Doc?

*Q: I think 1803 is when they defeated the French and got their independence.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. In any event, the U.S. government had been supporting Aristide. As I recall, he was allegedly elected president and then there was a rebellion, and he ended up in the United States in kind of a safe haven while we debated what we were going to do about it. By September 1994, we were ready to do something about it. The United States government was ready to do something about it. Things had pretty much gotten out of hand in Haiti. The decision was made that the United States was going to invade Haiti. Remember that?

*Q: Yeah. I'm not sure it was officially an invasion, though. Wasn't it a UN operation, that was sanctioned?*

WILLIAMS: You know, I don't remember. Oh, UN sanctioned. Sorry, yes, UN sanctioned. I was going to say I don't remember one "blue hat" in Haiti. In any event, they came to me as the director of International Programs and said we're going to have to man an operation to take President Aristide back to Haiti and set him up in the palace,

and by the way, keep him alive. I said, “All right. I’ve got nothing else going on....” [laughter] So for the next.... Actually, let me go back; this started way before this. This started like in June, and we were planning for September, to take him back, somewhere in that time frame, so we actually started much earlier.

We did several things. We had identified... In the interim period that Aristide had been here in the U.S. – for, I’m going to say a year or two, I don’t remember for sure but it had been a while – we had recruited former Haitians in New York City and elsewhere to become Aristide’s presidential protective detail, once he was back in Haiti. We recruited about 50 people, paid them, trained them, and then had to train them completely again because it didn’t stick. Parenthetically, if you don’t start with reasonably well-educated individuals, training just does not work all that well. The very individual core competencies are just not there to build on. Hence, the FBI, Secret Service, DS, and other federal agencies only recruit college graduates, which obviously is not so easy in many parts of the world. In any event, we were assembling this whole group of Haitians.

*Q: Can I stop you for just a second? When you say “we,” you mean DS?*

WILLIAMS: Yes.

*Q: DS did all of this?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. Under White House direction. At the same time we were seeking an American contractor that could assist the Haitian presidential protective detail. They would supplement the detail and provide on-the-job training. I don’t know if we did an open solicitation or we did some sort of emergency solicitation. I kept myself separate from that. I actually had Bob Boyke handle that for International Programs, but we went with procurement, the acquisitions people. We had to find an American company that could supplement the Haitians in Haiti to protect Aristide, because we could see they were manifestly unqualified to protect anybody.

*Q: A Blackwater kind of company?*

WILLIAMS: That’s right. That’s absolutely right. A Blackwater kind of company, and so we found a company. We did not do the selection ourselves. Eventually a company was selected, and there’s a reason I’m saying *we* did not select it. A company was eventually selected, and they were to recruit 30 or 40 people who for the most part were former Special Operations or Special Forces, and they were going to supplement the Haitian protective detail. The company that was selected was MVM, which I would ultimately work for just a few years later as senior vice president for government services. I want to make sure it is clear that I nothing to do with the selection process. I didn’t even know who the company was, frankly. But MVM was selected.

We started putting together this operation and how we were going to do it. DS agents are protecting Aristide in the U.S. at this point. The Haitians, his bodyguard, were somehow going to be moved back to Haiti after we invaded the country or whatever that UN action

was, that euphemism we're using for invasion. MVM is recruiting the American staff, and they're training them up in a protective services training program.

All of this kind of coalesced in September. I had our agents put Aristide on a plane in Miami. That's what they were going to do. He'd be taken to Miami, he would be put on a plane, and DS would take over, officially take control of his entire life right then and there. His Haitian bodyguards, I think, flew commercially over there in advance. I really don't remember. Somebody else was handling that. I picked up the phone and called my brigadier general friend Jerry Boykin over at the Pentagon and said, "I need a C-130." He replied: "Just one?" Sometimes you just have to love the military!

*Q: [Laughter] Different agencies, different views of the world!*

WILLIAMS: I said, "Yeah, just one." He said, "What do you want to move?" I said, "I have a bunch of steel and aluminum on pallets and other things, Lexguard and Lexan (which are bullet-resistant transparencies). I've got Seabees. I'm going to be building some stuff there. I've got a bunch of troops that I need to move there, a bunch of agents, about 30 of them. We've got lots of guns, Jerry, and stuff. I've got all this crap I've got to get over there. Oh yeah, we've all got suitcases and things, too." He said, "Okay, where do you want it?" "Andrews Air Force Base." "Okay. When do you want it?" The world was changing. Really, literally, that's what I did. That is exactly what I did. Jerry went on to be a two or three star general, I believe, and he was a good guy to work with. Again.

*Q: Clearly!*

WILLIAMS: No, he really was a good guy to work with on many levels. As an aside, several years earlier Jerry had taken Delta into Somalia. You may remember when we had this little incursion trying to hunt down war lords in Somalia. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, that did not turn out so well.

*Q: We're talking about the Delta Force, I presume, not Delta Airlines?*

WILLIAMS: Delta Force or Special Ops out of Fort Bragg, and several of his men were killed, several were injured. He was injured and it really, really had bothered him deeply. Really deeply, psychologically, that under his command he had lost these men. He was recovering. He was much better by now than he had been. I mean, he was morose when I first saw him after he got back from Somalia, and I had the highest respect for him. But he was better by this time. He was back. Much of it had bounced back to the old Jerry I knew, and he was ready to help with anything I wanted.

*Q: The plane was not to carry Aristide but to carry all the equipment and supplies you would need to protect him?*

WILLIAMS: Correct. Correct. We had moved Aristide in, too. I'm trying to think how we got him into Haiti and I believe it was by a commercial flight with DS agents. We moved armored vehicles over there for him as well. I may have shipped those over by

military plane, but we didn't have people on the plane, so they just ended up over there. We had some advance agents on the ground there already to assist. This was a major DS logistics operation.

A lot of these things were happening simultaneously. You may recall we did move a military force into Haiti, a small force from the 10<sup>th</sup> Marine division, I believe. Meanwhile, back down at Fort Bragg and at Pope Air Force Base, members of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division were literally sitting in planes on the runways at Pope Air Force Base, engines running, waiting for the word to take off. The 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne's job was going to be to parachute in and to secure the airport—what's the capital city of Haiti? Port-au-Prince, Port-a-Potty—to secure the airport in Port-au-Prince. They'd go ahead and set up a perimeter and make this as secure as hell. I know that intimately because Chris, our son, was sitting in one of those airplanes. My son Chris, who was a captain in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, was sitting in one of those planes with the engines running with his parachute on his back ready to go. Phenomenal and amazingly coincidental!

*Q: Wow.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, exactly.

*Q: In the end, if I recall correctly, the Haitian government collapsed and the invasion or whatever we're going to call it, action, was not necessary in that sense.*

WILLIAMS: Yes, except for the fact that I flew in that C-130 over there. Let's talk a little bit about that and how it all came together exactly, how we got the armored vehicles over there, how I got the MVM team in there, how the Haitian bodyguards who we'd been training got in there. All that's kind of blurry to me because actually I had delegated a lot of this out and said, "You take care of this, and you make it happen," so I wasn't intimately involved in the details. I do remember that I had one of my colleagues, Bob Boykin I believe, took Aristide from Miami to Haiti, and I think it was on a commercial flight after the government capitulated and we had military forces on the ground in Haiti. And we did, big time, even though we didn't invade *per se*. There were flights, special flights, from Miami, and we took Aristide back on one of those flights.

However, that's getting ahead of the story. We would fly first from Andrews. I would fly several days in advance. Why was I going? I called up DS Assistant Secretary Tony Quainton. I said, "Tony, I'm bored." "Okay, what do you want?" "I want to be the senior DS officer that goes back to Haiti and puts all of this in place in Haiti." He hem-hawed for all of 10 seconds and said, "Sure. We probably do need a senior person there given how politically high this is going to be on everybody's radar. So, absolutely. Take who you need. Take what you need. Go ahead and make it happen." I said, "I'll leave Mike Becker. He's my deputy. I'll leave Mike Becker in charge back up here, but I've got to get out of here. I need a little field time." He said, "Okay, do it." Tony was very supportive.

We assembled a team of DS special agents to really control all of the security at the palace, on president's detail, on everything. We had about 30 agents plus the American MVM detail that had been trained, plus Aristide's Haitian presidential protective detail, plus some Seabees who I had borrowed and was taking with me, plus all the military folks on the ground, and somehow it all kind of came together. All kidding aside, there was a great deal of planning and preparation, something DS does very well.

The first was the C-130 with my agents, Seabees, plexiglass, whatever, that went into the country. There were cars there, so we must have already shipped in some cars or they came shortly thereafter. I don't remember. We had cars, actually armored vehicles. That's the point I'm making. We got in there, and it was amazing, Peter. It was absolutely amazing.

Let's stop for now.

**[End tape 6b]**

*Q: Today is August 9, 2011. This is Peter Eicher interviewing Dennis Williams for the ADST oral history project. This interview is taking up from sessions which are on cassette tapes which ended with cassette number 6b, about halfway through that cassette. Denny, could you say a few words just to make sure you come through OK on the digital recorder?*

WILLIAMS: Yes, I will, Peter. Let me actually move this over here. Do you mind? I'm sure we're coming through loud and clear. Are we ready to pick up?

*Q: Let me just pause it just to make sure.*

*Q: Denny, when we left off a couple of years ago I think...*

WILLIAMS: It could be!

*Q: ...you were talking about your experiences in Haiti in 1994, and we've just listened to the last few minutes of that. You had just arrived in Haiti with the Aristide protective detail, and maybe you want to take up from there.*

WILLIAMS: Okay, thank you, Peter. I used the word amazing when we left off, and I think what was incredible about it is I'm not sure that I ever felt I owned a country before, but to some degree I did. Many, many parallel functions were taking place. We were there in advance of President Aristide arriving, and from there the agents that I had with me, some Seabees, we went over to the palace. That was our first stop. We went over to the palace only to be intercepted by U.S. military personnel who were acting under orders from another agency, and so that prompted a fairly interesting discussion as to who owned the palace. The answer was, ultimately, that we – DS – owned the palace. We set up operations in what would be the west wing of the palace.

As a parenthetical aside, this is the same palace that regrettably collapsed with the major earthquake that occurred in Haiti. Do you remember when?

*Q: Two or three years ago maybe? [Editor's note: 2010.]*

WILLIAMS: Yes. It was truly a beautiful palace. It was a beautiful, beautiful palace copied after something in Europe. I used to know; I don't recall anymore. It was just an absolutely gorgeous place, a place that Haitians, who are an incredibly poor people could at least point to as something they were proud of. In any event, at that time it was still standing. We took over the west wing of the palace and many of its rooms, and began setting up shop. We literally began to secure the palace as we would an embassy. Fortunately, it had a well-defined perimeter. We brought in walk-through metal detectors, we set up procedures for screening and searching visitors. We did all those things that we would do at an embassy.

Meanwhile, President Aristide was being readied to come back to Haiti, as I mentioned before, from Miami. We just brought him back on a commercial airline, as I mentioned earlier. We began setting up his protective detail, including his armored cars and the follow vehicles. I think by then the MVM protective people were on the ground as well, as was the Haitian presidential protective detail, and they were beginning to coalesce and cooperate since they did have to work together.

*Q: Those are the Haitians who you had recruited and trained, correct?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. The Haitian presidential protective detail were Haitians living in the U.S. Let's say expatriate Haitians. Some had become American citizens, some had not, but they were expatriate Haitians we had recruited. The majority were from New York and had been trained repeatedly with not a great deal of success. This is why, as I mentioned before, we had supplemented them with an American contract company, in this case MVM, which typically hired former military Special Operations folks, to supplement the Haitians. Mostly retired military Special Operations people, but all former military.

They did come together, and they set up protective operations. Meanwhile we're securing the palace. I am starting to make liaison. I was assigned – and this was rather stunning – I had a lieutenant colonel come up to me one morning and say, “Are you Mr. Williams?” I said, “Yes.” He introduced himself as lieutenant colonel somebody, and he said, “I have a battalion of soldiers here surrounding the palace, and I was told I had to report to you.” [laughter] “Okay, that's nice.” Now, mind you, I had been just a sergeant in the army! College-degreed sergeant, but a sergeant nonetheless, in military intelligence, so I really didn't do infantry operations. I did things at the officers club and other places (military intelligence had certain perquisites), but...

He was there, and it was comforting to have him there. Then we got serious. I assigned one of my agents as a liaison officer to him. We talked about evacuation plans. He moved armored personnel carriers and other vehicles into the courtyard of the palace where they

could not be seen by the general public, and we generally worked out an emergency evacuation plan to evacuate the president from the palace if that were to become necessary.

*Q: For those of us with less military experience than even you [laughter], how many people in a battalion?*

WILLIAMS: There are... You hear me hesitating. The silence is deafening because it depends where in history you would have asked that question.

*Q: Well, in 1994 in Haiti.*

WILLIAMS: In 1994 there probably were around 600 officers and enlisted men. Typically a battalion then consisted of about four companies, and each company would have had about 150 soldiers, so four times 150, or probably around 600 soldiers. I have to tell you that's a little bit of a guess. During Vietnam they were much, much heavier in number of troops, and they're much lighter today. Back in the day – Vietnam – a battalion had five companies of 200 soldiers each, or about 1000+ soldiers in a battalion.

*Q: Close enough for our purposes.*

WILLIAMS: In any event they did surround the palace. They maintained a 24/7 vigil on the perimeter, and to be very candid, that was very welcome to us because we certainly didn't have the forces to do that kind of perimeter support, and the assurance that nothing untoward would happen at the palace.

Meanwhile, on the inside we'd gotten everything pretty much ready for President Aristide to come back, and he did come back. I had not met the president before. I did go out to the airport for his arrival. I did accompany the detail back to the palace. He was brought in, and I did meet him that day. Typically, from then on I would meet with him once a day, once every other day, I would go and sit down and talk to him. I found him very nice, very easy to deal with, very pleasant, spoke English fluently as so many people do in the world. Just easy to deal with. He listened to what we told him. He did what we told him, and things went quite well. He was quiet, reserved, soft-spoken, well-mannered, and respectful. While I was there as the guy in charge of overall security – including his – it was a very nice mutually-supportive working relationship.

At the same time there were a lot of other things going on. The return of President Aristide to Haiti was a big deal for the U.S. embassy there as well. The ambassador and the staff in Haiti had been supplemented by additional Foreign Service personnel. Interestingly enough with all the military personnel on the island and all the senior ranking military officers, the person who chaired the working group on how we were to do all of these things, how we're going to protect Aristide and take care of all this other business, was a DCM, a lady whose name I do not recall. Actually I do, but I think I'll just leave it out. I do recall her, and I'm going to leave it out because we had some very, very serious clashes. I'm not quite sure why the ambassador just recused himself from all

participation in these plannings, but he did. He didn't participate at all, which I found stunning. In any event...

*Q: Do you recall who that was?*

WILLIAMS: No, I don't. Right offhand I don't, but he was a career officer, which is why I found it even more stunning. I think I would have understood if it had been a political selection, political choice, but he was not. It was a career Foreign Service Officer, and I could not understand why he did not get involved, but he didn't.

In any event, the DCM was in way over her head in trying to manage and organize an operation of this size, so this is why I think Assistant Secretary Tony Quainton sent me, because there were issues. The president was going to speak out on the veranda of the palace, and we had decided to build – not unlike things that had been done for the president of the United States – a plexiglass, bullet proof front cover. Microphones would be inside, and he would be clearly seen, but he could not be shot from any distance, from any building, from the crowd. We really had no way of securing all the buildings in that city or securing much of anything for that matter. That's not exactly what the military does best. DS and the Secret Service do, but the U.S. military does not. Besides, there were too many people, too many buildings and too little time.

In any event, there was an instant—instant!—disagreement over whether we should do that. The public affairs people in Haiti, supported by the DCM, demanded that we not build the protective shield while the president gave his speech. I insisted that it wasn't open for debate, it was being done, that I was there representing DS, which I was, and that it was going to be done whether they liked it or not. After rancor, outright rancor, the military went to the sidelines. They decided they had no cat or dog in this fight, and they didn't want any part of this discussion, so they did the right thing. They hid on the sidelines.

The thing that saved the day was, of all things, that the Haitian government representative to that meeting, who Aristide had appointed, finally kind of raised his hand, and he said, I never will forget this, he said, "We rather like the head of the president. We think we'll retain the bullet proof glass." [laughter] End of story. That was literally the end of the story, and of course, we did build it. The DCM and I were not to become personal friends.

The crowds were enormous, and they let them inside, on the palace grounds. This was President Aristide's decision, to allow people on the grounds of the palace. They were screened and searched using WTMD. It was a friendly crowd, and the whole day went quite well. At one point they did try to rush the palace, but it was one of those friendly situations. You can still get killed, but it was a friendly situation where they just wanted to touch him or see him or just get closer to him. It was fairly rapidly brought under control.

We continued to pull presidential and palace security together. This was probably my second week in Haiti, and I know I don't have unlimited time. We are staying, by the way, in the Hotel Montana. Hotel Montana is probably the only decent, really decent hotel in Haiti. It was up on a little mountain, hence Montana. It sat kind of above the city, above the pollution, but it did not sit above the sound of gunfire at night which you could hear from all over, but particularly in the city of Port-au-Prince. It is quite a ways up and away, though, so you were fairly well isolated. As another parenthetical aside, when the great earthquake took place the Hotel Montana was completely destroyed, and many, many people died there who were staying at the hotel. This is too bad, both the deaths that took place and the loss of a very good and beautiful hotel.

We also traveled around the country. I got a chance to go to various other parts of Haiti, actually went to a Club Med, as you, Peter, and I were joking about just a few minutes ago.

*Q: This was personal travel or travel with the president?*

WILLIAMS: No, not travel with the president. This was personal travel, but official travel. We were visiting some other cities just to see what conditions were like, and we would report that back. We did go up to the Club Med. It was quite closed as you would expect, although there was a caretaker staff there, and they had every intention of reopening now that Aristide came back. It was a rather nice facility right on the coast. It was very pretty. It seemed almost surrealistic when you looked at it in the context of the environment. Haiti is... Well, first of all, it was a dictatorship from 1802 or 1803 until modern times, and it is excruciatingly poor. Excruciatingly poor, I believe the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

As another parenthetical aside, there was a police force being formed up in Haiti, but there was an American component. I can't remember the name of it. It was rather a public safety effort, but there were American policemen, if you will, and there was a specific name for this group that had been brought to Haiti to establish law and order. The person in charge is the current police commissioner in New York City, whose name is evading me and who's been talked about to become the mayor of New York City, and I will have the name by the time I review the transcript. He was a character. He was a real character but part of my liaison position was to work with them and do whatever we could to help them. *[Editor's note: Raymond Kelly, who was New York City Police Commissioner from 1992 to 1994, served as Director of the International Police Monitors of the Multinational Force in Haiti from October 1994 through March 1995.]*

So we had the military there. Then we had a U.S. public safety force that was trying to work side by side with the Haitian police. We had DS there overseeing the security of the palace, overseeing the security for the president, overseeing motorcades, travel, all kinds of things. Also at about the same time and just shortly before I left it seems that President Aristide had been building a house back in Haiti, which surprised us, "What??" That was interesting, and I did go out to the house. Many of us went out to the house with his staff and went through the house. To this day I am pretty astounded at the size of the house,

projection TVs, and all the other stuff. I was wondering, “How did he pay for all of this?” But those are trivial details that I probably shouldn’t obsess about. In any event, it was quite a place! He would move in there after I had left. He was working and living in the palace but didn’t really want to stay there – it was a “house” but not a home.

*Q: Let me go back just a little. You were in the Hotel Montana. You mentioned hearing gunfire from the Hotel Montana, so was this still an active civil war or insurrection? What exactly was the gunfire about?*

WILLIAMS: I think the gunfire would be the equivalent of standing on the roof of the Pegasus Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica. You’re going to hear gunfire because there are bad guys doing bad things all over the city. Not so much an insurrection. I don’t recall that there was ever really an insurrection. It’s just a high crime location often with areas run by gangs. Guns were everywhere, unfortunately.

*Q: Criminal gangs caused the gunfire?*

WILLIAMS: Yes. It was really criminal activity. Another thought... One of the things I forgot to mention on the palace. When we finally did get in and we took over the palace in its entirety, one of the first things we did was a complete search of the palace. We broke into teams, and I went up into the attic. This was fascinating. You recall Papa Doc and Baby Doc... Do you remember the last names?

*Q: Duvalier.*

WILLIAMS: Yes. They were probably the last real occupants of the palace before everything completely deteriorated and, literally, up in the attic of the palace were the toys of Baby Doc. It was just surrealistic to be up there. You could see by the dust all over the floor that nobody had been up there for years and years and years. I was disturbing the dust as I walked across the attic floor.

The palace was, for the most part, completely empty, but there were just these anomalies. When you got to the living quarters of the palace where I presumed Baby Doc lived, the most striking thing that I still remember was that he had mirrors on all the walls and the ceiling. I’m sure that was because of self-adulation or for whatever reason, but you don’t quickly forget a room that was all mirrors everywhere except the floor. That was quite a place, too. The palace overall, as I said much earlier, was really, really a beautiful, beautiful place, and I’m so sorry it would ultimately be destroyed.

Moving on...

*Q: Let me go back before you move back again because you talked about meeting almost every day with Aristide...*

WILLIAMS: Correct.

*Q: ...or every other day, and that seems to merit just a little bit more than what you've said about it. When you met with him every day, were you just talking about the security plans for the day or was there a broader agenda?*

WILLIAMS: Good question. Typically I would meet with him at towards the end of the day. Typically four, five, or six in the afternoon. Generally what we'd go over is what had transpired that day, whether he had any concerns, any issues, and then generally we would talk about what we were going to be doing tomorrow and perhaps for the remainder of the week, changes to his schedule. He was very pleasant, but it was very businesslike. I had no interest in being his best friend, so it was very much Mr. Williams and Mr. President. That's fine, but nevertheless he was very, very cordial. He was a very pleasant person to deal with, but it was almost all business. There were no personal interactions. I have met a lot of dignitaries all over the world, and I always keep the relationships as business ones.

*Q: Were these one-on-one meetings?*

WILLIAMS: One-on-one.

*Q: Was he making a big effort to get out around the city and the country and meet his people and that sort of thing?*

WILLIAMS: No. I think he was a little leery yet at that point. I think there were so many other things on his palette at the time that he was hesitant to just run about. He did get out but he did not get out frequently. When he did, the outings were all very controlled, as you can imagine, very controlled excursions, but he did do it. We did the advance work for him, we moved helicopters for him. We did whatever we had to do, but most of his work was in the palace, and most of it was meeting people who were coming to the palace in droves, the folks who would become future ministers and members of his government, of his administration. At the moment that's probably what was needed more than anything else. He had to establish relationships and establish a functioning government. He had to rebuild the government almost from scratch, so that was very much of a challenge. Some of those leaders would continue to be leaders after Aristide was gone, but lots of the top people within Haitian society were there and wanted to help, so we saw a constant stream into the palace, into his office. That's where he spent the majority of his time.

*Q: Although clearly there was a potential for violence and a lot of disruption in Haiti at that time, and there had been a lot of violence before his return, did you find generally that it was pretty calm and you didn't have a lot to be concerned about?*

WILLIAMS: No, we rode around in armored vehicles with lots of weapons. I went back and forth back down to the embassy, as you can imagine, for meetings. The RSO really did not have much to do with the operations and understandably so. The RSO needed to stay focused on the safety and security of the embassy, but we did coordinate as you would expect. I did get out to those meetings, those major coordination meetings

involving the military and everybody else, and they did continue. Their importance began to fade really quickly after a routine was set up and once we had Aristide in good protective custody. Not protective custody! With good protective operations. The reasons for the meetings just started going away.

I do recall, however, at one point I needed some support from the military, and I wasn't getting it. I thought I was just getting blown off or ignored, and I can't remember what all the issues were. There were some vehicle issues, and there were some other military coordination issues, and to make a long story short, I sent word – I think through my lieutenant colonel – that I wanted to see this two or three star general. Oh.

I said, "There are some issues I want to talk to the general about that I'm not getting resolved. I want to see the general." Okay. Well, you might as well fire a couple of rounds up into the air. It's like, "Oh, my God. Now what?" Within two days there was this captain or major knocking on my door. He was the general's aide or one of his aides. What were my issues? I listed out about five things that I was not terribly happy about and what I needed in the way of support. Five or six at the most. Okay. I said, "I still want to see the general," and they set up a meeting.

Sure enough, in the military's way – you gotta love them – when I went in there, there were no issues. There were no issues! "Yes, Mr. Williams, we've taken care of that. Yes, you'll have your vehicles, yes that, whatever it was." So it became like a photo op. I mean, we drank coffee and shook hands and hugged, and the issues were all resolved before we even met. I kind of liked that! All right, the hugging was hyperbole.

*Q: That works!*

WILLIAMS: But it was, suddenly good cooperation. We absolutely needed the military's presence and support. We didn't have problems at the palace, which could easily have become a magnet for those who were disenfranchised or whatever, but you know, having a 600 person army battalion right there rather made the palace an undesirable target. In any event, that went well.

I think we can go ahead and bring to closure my time in Haiti. I was there three, maybe four weeks maximum, and that was about all I could stay away from the department and my family. I spent a lot of time on the phone with my colleagues back in Washington, but it was really getting time for me to get back. I left one of my FS-1 officers there – in Haiti – who was very good, and he would remain in charge of the 30-some agents. What would eventually evolve over time is we would scale those agents down month by month, and eventually we would reduce the people, the DS officers in the palace, to three. A senior, a senior guy which meant typically an FS-1, a senior guy and two or three other agents to assist him with various things. Part of it was to oversee the protective detail and just ensure through observation that they were functioning properly. It was also for liaison with the U.S. embassy, coordination with the U.S. military as necessary, but mostly it was a coordination and liaison function.

**[End of File 10]**

WILLIAMS: As I was saying, ultimately we would leave three or four people behind at the palace in Haiti. That would actually go on for several years. But we made quite an investment in Haiti. When you think about it, it's phenomenal that DS would protect in somebody in another country, their president, and that's exactly what we were doing.

*Q: That is pretty phenomenal. Has that been done anywhere before?*

WILLIAMS: No, but it has been done subsequently.

*Q: Subsequently, yes.*

WILLIAMS: Liberia, as I recall.

*Q: Iraq, or do you know?*

WILLIAMS: No, I don't believe so, but you know, Peter, I answer that with no confidence. I've never heard anybody talk about protecting any Iraqis in Iraq.

*Q: I would suspect probably not.*

WILLIAMS: In any event, I would head back to International Programs, probably in October. This time of the year is an extremely difficult time for us, September and October, because in addition to what is going on elsewhere, as in Haiti, we have the UN General Assembly going on in New York City. At the UN General Assembly, Diplomatic Security is responsible for probably 30 to 35 protective details, not to mention that the Secret Service is up there. This would have been enormous manpower drain on all of DS worldwide. As I think I mentioned earlier, at this time we had about 600 or fewer agents. Now, and I should correct the number I used earlier, there are somewhere over 2,000 agents. It is a much different scenario with 2,000 agents, and even that number is not enough.

I went back to International Programs, and I must tell you at this point, Peter, I can see the end. The end is near. I am going to retire in September of 1995, and this is in the fall of 1994. I know that I'm really winding down, and there were no other phenomenal events in the remainder of 1994 and 1995. Things were just not in turbulence as they are now. We probably had a total of around 200 agents overseas as RSOs. Today, just to give you some basis for comparison, today 2015, there are probably over 850, perhaps over 900 agents overseas in DS positions, RSO positions. Of course that number is absolutely skewed by the number of people that are in Iraq and Afghanistan and Pakistan. Those three countries do destroy and distort the entire Foreign Service. The Middle East, in general, distorts the entire Foreign Service and has turned DS into an almost paramilitary force – not particularly good in my opinion, but not likely to change in the near future.

So, I aim at retirement, which is September 30, 1995.

## Retirement

*Q: Were you in International Programs right up until you retired?*

WILLIAMS: I was. It was probably one of the most enjoyable jobs I ever had because it was a true management job. IP either selected them or approved everybody who went overseas. Once they were overseas, they were rated and reviewed by the admin counselor and the DCM, but now the DCM and ambassador rate and review. But they all know they're going to return to DS one day, and so International Programs, as you can imagine, had a great deal of influence over what happened overseas. We would back them up when things didn't go exactly the way they should. We would step in. Big DS would step in and try to make things right.

It was a great job. It was a terrific job, and then every ambassador, virtually every ambassador who went through DS would stop by, and I would meet him/her because I would often be the person they would call if they needed something. It was a great job, and I retired from there, as I said, on September 30, 1995.

*Q: Last day of the fiscal year.*

WILLIAMS: Last day of the fiscal year!

*Q: Is that a coincidence?*

WILLIAMS: You know, when I left there, I was a bit sad. Of course I was sorry that I didn't get promoted to MC. There were no MC promotions the entire time I was eligible, so there's no point in whining about it. There just weren't. It was a tough time for the entire Foreign Service.

*Q: Maybe you could talk a little bit about that because I think that's something which has also changed a lot in subsequent years. It is probably good for somebody to put it on the historical record in an interview.*

WILLIAMS: Perhaps. From 1992 through the time I retired in 1995... You will recall that President Clinton was elected in 1992 and Vice President Gore. During those years it was decided that downsizing of government was an appropriate thing to do, specifically downsizing the number of direct hire employees in the government. Upsizing the number of contract employees working for the government was also under way. I'm not sure how they balanced each other out.

In any event, as part of that downsizing, the Foreign Service itself was suffering from attrition and decreased staffing. It was suffering from a lack of promotions across the board. It kind of was a hurtful time. Foreign Service functions cannot be offset by contractors, and a lot of things went undone or didn't get done properly, so perhaps with the best of intentions, the executive branch of the government decided to downsize itself

but didn't do so necessarily in a logical, thoughtful manner. We all got caught up in that. I think both of us kind of got caught up in that. Certainly I did.

For no particularly good reason, there were no MC promotions within DS from the time of my eligibility of 1989 until the time... It would have been six years, so it would have been 1989 through 1995 and then I was out in 1995. Literally, no MC positions. Today that has changed significantly. I think within DS alone there are probably at least eight or ten MC positions. They're not all filled with MCs, although most are, but the positions are there. This is way different from back then when there were none for six years. None at all for six years. Times have changed.

DS today is a whole lot different from DS back then. When I left, there were 600 agents and today there are somewhere over 2,000 and still growing. DS has 42,400-plus employees worldwide. I know these numbers because I do presentations on this, and I'll explain a little bit more on that when we move on. There are also around 215 DS offices overseas. There are about 270 missions overseas, so DS has offices in roughly 215 or so of those, almost all significant posts. There are 850 or more DS staff overseas and many, many, many more, thousands of DS support staff overseas assisting RSO offices as well. Times have changed dramatically.

Should we move on?

### **Independent consultant**

*Q: Okay. Retirement, but that's the beginning of a new road instead of just the end of an old one.*

WILLIAMS: What I wanted to say about that, too... Well, I really would have liked to be promoted. There was no question. I made OC in 14 years, and that's fairly quick, so as always in the State Department, good work is rewarded by being kicked out sooner. In any event I didn't make MC, and that's the way the rules of the game were, and I accepted them.

I went out, and for a while I was interviewing for jobs, but I really didn't want to be an RSO for a company. I really didn't want to do that. I did work as an independent consultant for a while doing a whole variety of things, but I'd like to refer to that as the uncertainly principle or uncertainty paradox, because some months I would invoice \$20,000 and some months I would wait for the phone to ring. You know what I mean?

*Q: I think I do!*

WILLIAMS: [laughter] That got kind of old. I mean I was doing lots of things for lots of people and lots of organizations. I even did a couple of trips for DS. DS contacted me. I kept my clearances. Of all things, I went on the IG, the Inspector General's staff as a GS-15 WAE IG inspector. I never went out on an IG inspection. But DS used that avenue to have me do special things, if they needed me to do something. For example, in the later

'90s you will recall bombings in Saudi Arabia. The Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, national guard building where U.S. servicemen were also stationed, and of course the barracks, you will recall, in Dhahran.

In any event, there were attacks, bomb attacks, on our U.S. facilities at the Saudi Arabia national guard headquarters, and then terrorists literally tried to take down a U.S. military dormitory, an apartment that was being used primarily by U.S. Air Force people in Dhahran. I went to both sites shortly after the bombings. DS asked me to go out and asked me to do what sounds like a fairly simple thing, that is to go to the three major cities, Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran, and talk to the U.S. business, companies doing business in those cities, to just meet with them to discuss their situations and concerns.

It was a great, great fun time, except for the fact you had to be in Saudi Arabia. It was a great thing to do. It was great sport. I got together with the American business communities. Usually one of the leaders in the business community in Riyadh, Jeddah, or Dhahran would bring colleagues together, and I would address them for about 20, 30 minutes, then we would have general discussions. The companies would sign up if they wanted me to come over and talk with them on an individual basis. Almost all signed up, so it was a six-day TDY.

Well, I filled all my time. The whole time I was there I was just going company to company to company, and I was doing little things. I know a little bit about improvised explosive devices, or VBIEDs if you prefer, i.e., Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices. I heard a new one the other day. This is pathetic: BBIED, Body Borne Improvised Explosive Devices. Well, now we know this is an ISIS/ISIL/Al Qaeda standard, thus a new acronym.

I know a little bit about how to protect against them. Back then we were mostly concerned with vehicle borne improvised explosive devices, so we talked a lot about how they could protect themselves and things that they should do. Simple things like anonymity. Take the big sign down that says Northrop Grumman. You might as well have a bull's eye up there if you're concerned with this stuff. Most of them agreed. The people they needed to deal with knew where they were, so signs really were not needed. They didn't need to have a big sign up there to advertise. Then we talked about things like set-back and how you would control vehicles and on and on. Very practical things that are second nature to those of us who had been doing this for some time. But it was a lot of fun, and it was a change of pace, and the business folks I dealt with were most appreciative of the State Department's support.

Somewhere in there, though, out of nowhere like late 1996 or early 1997 I got a call from the president of MVM.

### **MVM, Vice President of Government Operations**

*Q: Does MVM stand for something?*

WILLIAMS: MVM stood for the last names of the original owners, but that was no longer true. For example, V stood for Chuck Vance, and Chuck went off to form his own company. It was Darius Marquez who called me from MVM and invited me to lunch. A very short version of this, he pitched me to come work for him. I said, "To do what?" and he said to me, "To be the vice president of government operations." I liked that. I liked the concept of running operations because that's what I do best.

I did join MVM as the vice president of government operations. In my portfolio... MVM was a relatively small company – it had about \$50 million in business, which is a relatively small amount for this kind of service company – but I had \$44 million in government services income. I had the majority of the company portfolio.

It was a lot of fun at first. I worked with clients like the DC public school system. We provided all the security, safety, and intervention officers for the DC public school system. We provided protection with sworn officers, special deputy U.S. marshals, deputy U.S. marshals, sworn for periods they were working for the Justice Department downtown, so all law enforcement people. We had that contract. We had the contract with the CIA for some of their facilities in Tyson's Corner and McLean and several other government contracts, all very interesting, all working very well. I was happy with the extent of my portfolio.

I really misstated that. Initially I was director of operations for everything, but eventually we would break off government business as we got more of it. We got more government business in the sense that we got U.S. Marshal contracts for protecting federal court houses all across much of the northeast. I don't remember the exact geographic area anymore, but it was a lot. It was a big contract, and we had two of those. I could no longer handle the commercial business. I was too busy. Those were moved over to somebody else to take care of, and I focused exclusively on the government contracts.

We did well. It was a very ethical company. We were very honest with people we dealt with, both our employees and our clients. Very honest. But I'll tell you a story, how cutthroat this is.

We had a contract right down here on Route 50. I'll let the organization go nameless. We were to supply them secret, cleared staff. Secret, cleared guard staff. Couldn't do it. For the seven dollars or whatever they paid us an hour, eight dollars an hour, nine dollars an hour, it was insignificant. We could not find people with a clearance to work for six, seven, or eight dollars an hour. Our margins, our general administration and overhead costs were remarkably small.

I went to the client in the spirit of good faith and said, "We really have a problem. The market has gotten to such a point where people with clearances can go to any number of other places and make a lot more money. We can't find people, and we're going to have to figure something out to raise the rate here because it's not possible." They said, "No. It's your problem."

You realize just how big this was. No sense of shared dilemma. We anticipated this answer.

*Q: Your problem because you had a contract to do it for a certain amount?*

WILLIAMS: Sure. Sure. Even though we tried to work with them to come to a mutual agreement to recognize that we couldn't overcome something we couldn't overcome. They wouldn't hear. They didn't care. So we gave them 90 days' notice. The contract did allow either party 90 days or 60 days, whatever it was, notice that you were going to cancel the contract. We gave them notice to cancel the contract. The incredible irony is we wanted to raise the wage—I'm going to make this up—from like seven dollars an hour, or seven-fifty, to nine dollars. They wouldn't do it. So we quit the contract, and they had to go get a new contractor. Ironically, I think it was the Vance Security. Chuck Vance's new company and, of course, I think they had to pay 10 dollars an hour. It was like, "Why do people shoot themselves in the foot?" It's just amazing.

I realized somewhere along there I didn't really like the business. Slowly but surely I was being dragged away from operations into business development. I was getting involved in writing more and more proposals. Okay, that's fine. Proposals take an enormous amount of time. MVM would go after any number of RFPs (requests for proposals) from the government, and the government was our primary client base. After a while when you're on your tenth or twelfth proposal, you realize you're not doing operations anymore, you're doing business development.

Then I was assigned a business development person to work for me. I hadn't hired her, and in my opinion she wasn't very good. The owners of the company, Dario and Karen Marquez, had hired her. They thought she was terrific and somehow when they realized that something wasn't working well, then they immediately shoved her somewhere else, under me. I'm thinking, "I don't like this at all."

I started looking for a way out. I decided... And Karen, one of the owners, and I had had a clash. I was down at the Department of Justice with their senior people working on some labor issues, union issues, and my cell phone rings, and it's Karen. She is completely upset with something that's just happened with the Fairfax County sheriff's department, another one of our clients. I'm in the middle of all of these people, and she is not having a good day on the phone. Finally I said, "Karen, I'll take care of it." She perceived that I was just blowing her off and not having any interest in her. In fact, that wasn't the situation at all. I was in the midst of a whole throng of people where I really couldn't detail out what was going on.

I did handle it. After I got done with Justice I went out to the sheriff's department, met my buddy the captain out there, and whatever the issue was we solved it in about two minutes, and I went back. But this wasn't over. This is when I think I realized, "I'm leaving." The owners wanted to have a big meeting, almost a confrontational meeting. I wrote my resignation out and had it in my inside coat pocket. The comptroller for the company was a sweetheart who I loved dearly, Fran Townsend. Fran had told Dario and

Karen, “If you take this road, this approach with Denny, he will quit and walk out, and he’s been the best operations person you’ve ever had.” They stepped back a little bit. While it was a bit confrontational, everybody stepped from the brink of the precipice, although I decided that day that I was leaving. It was their company, and I was just another expendable employee, like so many others I had seen come and go.

We went through a couple more proposals. We did one for another guard contract for federal courthouses. We didn’t win it, and I took that as an opportunity to accept blame for that, which really wasn’t my fault because we didn’t win it on price, and I did not price the proposals. I turned in my resignation.

Interestingly enough for the three weeks—I had three weeks before I was going to leave—Dario never spoke to me again. Never spoke to me again. That says all that needs to be said. I didn’t really care. I needed to leave. It wasn’t healthy for me, and I knew it wasn’t healthy for me. It was starting to affect my sleep, and it was a different stress level, so I left.

*Q: How long were you with MVM?*

WILLIAMS: Two and a half years.

*Q: That’s a good long stretch.*

WILLIAMS: Yeah, and as I say, at the outset it was a lot of fun. I helped set up training programs, I helped recruit good people, I got operations turned around when they needed to be turned around. I started having monthly staff meetings with all of the program managers. I did things that nobody had ever done before. I got finances under control, took clients to lunch. The clients now called me first. If there was an issue they called me, and we resolved it. That is all clients were looking for. We divorced ourselves from some of the commercial contracts that were simply untenable financially. It was fun for a while but then it went into this business, as I mentioned, business development phase, and I couldn’t get out of it. I didn’t want to be a marketer. I didn’t want to do business development at all; it was not what I was hired for – I was hired to run operations, which I do very well.

*Q: Had you made plans for the future at the time you quit?*

WILLIAMS: No.

### **Independent consultant**

*Q: Okay, what happened next then?*

WILLIAMS: Well, I quit. I took the opportunity to quit. It didn’t matter. I had to quit, so I wasn’t too terribly concerned. A couple of things had happened while I was still at MVM. I got a call from an old friend, Fred King, the DS agent who’s in charge of

security at NATO headquarters in Belgium, and he wanted to know if I'd be willing to work on direct contract with NATO, direct consulting agreement with NATO, to help them design and build the new NATO headquarters in Brussels. I thought this is a dream come true! I get to fly back and forth to Brussels? Are you kidding me? Mussels in Brussels? I always liked Brussels, a favorite city.

Before that even started I got another phone call within just a day or two of quitting, from another old friend, Jeff Bosworth, a new senior agent, who said, "We need somebody to go to Budapest and be the class coordinator for a class of policemen coming from some of the "Ickystans." Jeff was now a senior guy in the DS Training Center, which, ironically, is where he had worked for me when I was the Director.

*Q: Isn't the FBI training center there, in Budapest?*

WILLIAMS: It's not the FBI training center. It's *known* as the FBI training center. It's actually the International Law Enforcement (INL) Training Center there. INL actually sponsors this, pays for this, and funds DS to go out and provide staff to manage one or two of their programs. DS has the deputy position there, but the director is an FBI agent. There are about four of these around the world. DS is the director to one of them, and Customs is the director of someplace else. They kind of rotated around. They needed a coordinator, a class coordinator, for this class of 40 people from the 'Stans, as best I can remember. One group was from Armenia. One of the classes was from Armenia, and I don't remember where the other one was from. The Armenians were very good.

My job was to go out there, make sure they didn't get into trouble, coordinate the class activities, go over the curriculum with them, basically be a house mom and then teach them passport/visa fraud and what DS does around the world. It was interesting and fun, and a great transition.

I was there for two months. Budapest is a lovely, lovely place.

*Q: Budapest in the summertime, not a bad stint for a couple of months.*

WILLIAMS: You think???

*Q: I seem to recall visiting you while you were there.*

WILLIAMS: Oh, I love Budapest! And the vodka? What was it called? There's a street right outside the Marriott – the Vaci, Rodeo Drive. I was right downtown in some sort of Marriott business hotel, so I had this kind of mini-suite with bar and mini-kitchen and all of those kinds of things, and separate bedroom and bathroom. The Vaci, the main walking street through Budapest, was right outside my door. Just a beautiful place. That was on the Pest side. I think the Buda side is where the International Law Enforcement academy was. I think also that's also where the Marine House was, on the Buda side. The embassy was on the Pest side. Buda and Pest are separated by the Danube River.

I got down to the embassy a couple of times a week, to have dinner with the RSO, whatever, get out to the commissary because I did have to buy my own food. I did have to take care of that. I think we met friends, Peter and Stephanie; you remember that, Peter? Terri, my wife, flew out to Budapest. It was not heavy lifting in Budapest. It was a lot of fun because it was a nice environment. The Marine House out there has to be one of the most beautiful in the world. The ambassador kept threatening to take it because it looked right over the Danube. The Marine House was up high on a cliff overlooking the Danube. Another parenthetical aside: you could still see the bullet holes, the pock marks, from World War II on the walls and some of the edifices, the old buildings, up on the Buda side. It was fascinating. While I was there, I drafted a complete class coordinator guide to be used by subsequent DS officers; it had never been done before.

But eight weeks there was enough. I came back, and I started going out to Brussels pretty routinely, and that was really great. I mean, I loved that. Once a month I'd get on the plane, fly out to Brussels for a couple of weeks, work with the architects, the engineers, the designers. I was designing the security systems, all of them, and that was great fun. I would work there a couple of weeks, come home, write reports, pull up reports, put things together, and then fly back out.

*Q: Was that for DS, or OBO, or for a company?*

WILLIAMS: For NATO.

*Q: For NATO!*

WILLIAMS: NATO paid me directly. Now, why I paid U.S. income taxes I have no idea, because they never sent me a W-2, but that's another story. Anyway, it's a citizen's obligation, so I declared the income and paid my taxes.

*Q: You would have had to if you were not overseas for 330 days a year.*

WILLIAMS: Listen to what I said: NATO does not send out W-2s to anyone, neither to me nor the USG. But I was honest and paid. In any event, it was a lot of fun. It was fun working with the architects and engineers. I guess I was always stunned that regardless of the language they spoke, Flemish, French, whatever it was, they were so kind to me because they would always devolve to English for me. We went out to lunch every day. Of course they all spoke English fluently.

So I was working directly with NATO, and I would work literally at the offices of the architects and engineers. My colleague out there, Fred Krug, would ask me to stay with him at his house. His wife had gone back to the States, and he had this enormous house. He also had a spare car, so I had an old BMW there. I think Fred frankly wanted a little bit of company from time to time because it was a big, big house. In any event, I drove the old BMW around the city to different events. I stunningly remember filling up the gas tank for about a hundred dollars, which reminded me that the cost of petrol in Europe is a

whole lot different than the cost of fuel here. And it was a good gig, and continued right up until everything imploded.

One day when I was out there, Fred called me and asked me to come over to the NATO headquarters to tell me that his wife has just called him to tell him she was divorcing him. His world fell in around him, and he curtailed. The end of the story, without any of the details, is that he felt compelled to curtail and go back to the United States and resolve his personal issues. Fred was my sponsor. When he left, this assignment came to an abrupt end. When he left it all fell apart. I really don't know... To this day I don't know for a fact if they ever completed the new NATO headquarters. Do you know, Peter?

*Q: No, I have no idea.*

WILLIAMS: I'll have to research that before we go over the notes for this. It was a shame. I really, really liked the job.

But again, happenstance would smile. I went down to some sort of presentation in the Marriott Hotel down in Rosslyn, and of all things ran into Wayne Rychak, who at the time was the deputy assistant secretary for countermeasures in DS. He started talking about our inability to adequately protect our lock-and-leave posts overseas. He was lamenting that we didn't have any sort of remote capability to watch over these missions.

That would precipitate another phone call in just a matter of weeks from an old colleague who was still there, Roy Higgins. He was an agent, but he went from being an agent to GS employee, and he was offering me a job to come back into security technology, to the Office of Security Technology, as a GS-15, step 10, personal services contractor to work on some sort of new system that might allow us to remotely monitor our facilities overseas.

### **Department of State, Office of Security Technology, DS**

In the summer of 2000, being relatively bored and having a great offer to come back and work on a special project no one had ever done, I decided to rejoin DS. It was for the DS Office of Security Technology, and my general mandate was to start exploring whether or not it would be possible to remotely monitor – from Washington, D.C., or any other place for that matter – to remotely monitor our security systems at our U.S. missions, i.e., embassies and consulates.

You would think that sounds perhaps easier than it really is. Just some numbers for the books. You will recall that I mentioned there are about 270 Foreign Service posts overseas, to include missions such as the U.S. mission to NATO, embassies, consulates general, consulates, etc.

The only thing all those places—all of them—have in common, and they all do, is OpenNet, the State Department's own classified communications system. All of those posts do not have ClassNet, the State Department's classified communications system,

but they all do have OpenNet. OpenNet is really, to use a metaphor, it is really the railroad tracks across which everything travels. ClassNet travels through OpenNet. FBI Net travels through OpenNet. All these other sub-networks tunnel through OpenNet. And most, like ClassNet, use various high-level encryption. So, my slowly forming concept was if everybody else can tunnel through OpenNet and use it, why can't we?

In 2000, until about 2002, we would begin exploring the marketplace through RFIs, requests for information, as to what kind of systems were out there that could integrate our various security systems. Before we get too lost in the technical jargon, I want to simplify this by explaining. At a U.S. mission overseas – doesn't matter what it is, embassy, consulate, consulate general, whatever – we have certain standardized technical security systems.

You've seen them. You are familiar with most of them. We have video cameras; we have alarm systems; we have walk-through metal detectors; we have explosive detection equipment; we have automated access control systems; we have imminent danger notifications systems. We have all kinds of things, but they're mostly standardized at our missions, regardless the mission or country. They're not different. They're not unique from one post to another. With fairly standardized systems overseas, we know the extent of our universe. What we don't know was how many digital video recorders might be at a post, but we can be reasonably certain there will be at least one digital video recorder at every post.

With that as the concept, that everything is fairly standard overseas, we just have to come up with a communications route. We set out to find companies that could integrate this sort of equipment for transmission via whatever kind of DS network we devised back to the United States, or anywhere we wanted.

We did put together a request for information, and we got responses. In fact we interviewed over 30-some companies. We ultimately invited six companies to provide presentations over three days, one in the morning and one in the afternoon to a panel that I had selected and assembled, a panel of experts who would validate, verify...what's the word I'm looking for?...rate, if you will, all the proposals or rate the capabilities of these companies the do the kind of work we wanted. First of all to ensure that they understood what we wanted and second, did they really have the capability to do it and third, was it user-friendly enough for us to adopt it?

Six companies came to the DS training center out in Dunn Loring, Virginia. Six companies presented morning and afternoon for three days and then we selected. From the six we selected a first choice, and as it would turn out the first choice almost immediately fell flat on its face. They exaggerated their capabilities in several things. We found that they were not easy to use, and after three months or four months we just cut them loose. We just said, "You're the wrong company, and we're not going to continue to play."

We then went on to the second tier company which was a company by name of Software House, and Software House had a product called C Cure. The product was really an automated access control system, but it had a very, very flexible field control panel that we could connect almost anything else into. We began focusing on C Cure, and in 2001, ironically on September 10, 2001, we began our surveys of posts overseas as to whether or not we could do an installation. I selected six trial posts to do installations of this new paradigm, and those posts were—it's almost hard for me to say this with a straight face—Nassau, the Bahamas, San Jose, Costa Rica, Montreal, Canada, Toronto, Canada, Paris, France, and Berlin, Germany.

*Q: You didn't want to go to East Asia?*

WILLIAMS: Nah, too far. Actually there was a rational reason why each of these six was chosen.

*Q: I'm sure there was.*

WILLIAMS: I'm sure there was. Yes, of course. Nassau, well I covered Nassau, and I wanted to go back. [laughter] No, that's not the reason. Nassau and San Jose, which would be our first two installations, were small embassies, relatively close, similar time zones, with Marine Security Guards if our system didn't work. If our installations, what we were trying to do, did not work, we knew we could fall back on the Marine Security Guards at posts. I'll explain how this concept and topology works a little bit later, and look at a little more detail.

Those were our two posts. Again, small with Marine Security Guards close by, easy to get to you, same time zones more or less. We went out to Nassau first and did the survey in Nassau. Terri went with me to just make sure it was still a nice place. That Paradise Hotel out there is just phenomenal. Best aquarium I've ever seen in a private hotel, and what an overall phenomenal place.

Then we flew to San Jose, Costa Rica on September 10, and that got kind of interesting as you can imagine. When I got up on September 11... To this day I remember looking up in the little TV guide that came with the hotel, CNN, Channel 25. I turned on the cable TV or whatever it was, satellite TV, punched in two-five, and I'm looking at a building burning in New York. What the hell is this? I just assumed I got a movie or something, so I hit two-five again, CNN live in New York, and I realized. This shook the sleep and the cobwebs out of my head, and I realized that I was not watching a movie, that in fact something catastrophic had happened in New York. I think like most of us I went immediately into denial and hoped that it was an accident. I went in and took a shower, came back out, and the second tower had been hit and I knew right then and there it was no accident, that neither tower was an accident.

It's interesting what transpired. I gathered my group; there was a team of about six of us; I gathered them. We went over to the embassy, got into the embassy. Absolute chaos. The RSO had an assistant, but the assistant wasn't there. The assistant was back in the

United States for something, so two DS agents were stationed in Costa Rica but only one was actually there, and he was going into an EAC meeting, Emergency Action Committee Meeting, or country team meeting, or something, and he was panicked. We knew each other from years gone by. He asked me to go sit in the RSO's office and answer the phone. Just answer his telephones. I cannot tell you the number of telephone calls I got that day from expatriate Americans living in Costa Rica in abject panic. "What do we do???" You first thought is, "What do we do?" I said, "You're in Costa Rica. Go back and have another *cervesa*. "What do you mean, what do you do? You don't do anything. Go home! Turn on the TV. Get another beer." You know, what happened in New York happened—then we heard about Washington—has no bearing on what's happening here. I said, "Thank you for expressing your concern, please go away." I took phone call after phone call like that. Then I had somebody run into the office, an embassy employee, and after we got by the "Who are you?" he said, "My God! The State Department's on fire." This was the rumor, the new rumor going throughout the mission.

*Q: I remember that.*

WILLIAMS: The Department of State is on fire. I said, "Really?" He said, "Yes. It is! It is!" I said, "Let me make a phone call." I picked up the phone, and I called a friend of mine, a friend of mine and yours, Tom McKeever. I just happened to know his number off the top of my head, and I knew where he sat. He was sitting across the street, across Virginia Avenue, in the old DS building, and I knew that he sat on the side that looked down on the State Department. I called Tom – my crazy Foreign Service employee is still standing in front of me jumping up and down – and said, "Hey, Tom?" "Yes?" "This is Denny. I'm down in San Jose in the embassy," and after we got by that I said, "Hey, Tom look out your window. Is the Department of State on fire?" "No." I said, "Tom, are you sure? Really look at the building." He said, "No, it's not on fire." I said, "Tell me what you see." He said, "I see smoke over at the Pentagon." I said, "Okay." He said, "Yeah. Nothing's happening here. A lot of people out in the streets and a lot of people going home or trying to go home, but no." I think that summarizes the day metaphorically, just how much bad information, frightening information, was flying around from person to person. Erroneous information.

Strange as it seems, somewhere in there I thought about calling home, so I decided to call home. I was stunned that I just picked up the phone and dialed and my phone rings at home, and my younger son Jeff answered the phone. He's a little in a panic, too. "My God, what's happened? Something's happened in New York, something's happened in downtown DC." I said, "Jeff, I want you to do a couple of things." I said, "I want you to fill the bathtub with water, precaution in case the power utilities and service go out." We had a big Jacuzzi bathtub so I said, "Fill the bathtub with water." I actually told him where my weapons were; he did not know. And again, I didn't know how bad things were either, and I told him these things to do as precautions.

We had a plan where our sons and everybody would meet at our house. Chris was en route, as it turns out, and Terri was trying to get home. It was a mess. It was a real mess. She had an awful time making it from FSI where she was teaching, and they just

dismissed everybody at FSI, but the roads were a mess. It was too late. The roads were actually jammed. It took her three or four hours to get home, and she saw... Scary. She saw ambulance after ambulance after ambulance heading downtown, as it turned out to the Pentagon. Your worst nightmare. I stayed and helped the RSO the rest of the day there in the embassy, and now we had a bigger problem. We couldn't leave. You'll recall that the FAA shut down all air traffic. All planes were ordered to land at the closest airport.

Interestingly enough, if we all recall, the shutdown of the U.S. skies, that is, the removal of all the airplanes out of the sky was actually made out of Herndon, Virginia at the FAA's operation center in Herndon, Virginia, by the GS-15 senior watch officer, who after watching the chaos decided on his own volition, and you have to give this man a great deal of credit for making this kind of decision, because it can go one of two ways. He made the decision that all planes would be ordered to land, and he so ordered from the FAA's operations center there.

I've got to tell you, GS-15 isn't that high in the pecking order, so ordering everything out of the sky is a big deal. It turns out that the FAA absolutely endorsed that decision. Of course I think we'd all agree at the moment that was probably the only thing to do to bring some order to the chaos because nobody knew what was a terrorist plane anymore, and nobody knew what was legitimate.

We, however, back in San Jose, went ahead and did our survey in the coming days, and I must tell you some touching things. A very touching event happened down there. Flowers began appearing the next day outside the U.S. embassy outside the fence. It was incredibly touching to see this. I mean by the hundreds if not thousands of flowers – a gesture of sympathy and solidarity.

Another of those little asides, is that more U.S. social security checks are delivered in San Jose, Costa Rica, than anywhere else in the world. It has an amazingly large American expatriate community. Huge expatriate community. Why? No standing army, absolutely excellent medical facilities, and relatively low crime and corruption, and inexpensive living. So there are a lot of Americans, and I'm sure many of the American expatriates were among those who brought flowers to the embassy as well.

*Q: It must have been hard to get people to focus on your mission.*

WILLIAMS: Very hard. The greatest thing is we weren't dependent on mission assistance for the most part. We weren't dependent on others doing things. We were depending on others showing us or just taking us around. We didn't need much from anybody. We were pretty self-sufficient in determining the number of DVRs, for example, determining the number of automated access card readers, cameras, things like that. We could make our own observations, so we didn't really need a lot of help. That worked out okay, but we had a much bigger problem than that. We couldn't leave!

We flew in on Monday, September 10, and we were supposed to fly out on Friday, September 14. Couldn't get out. Could not get out. There were no flights out. There were no flights to Miami. Everything was still more or less closed down. I had no idea the chaos in the airport in Miami, but I would.

What do you do in a situation like that? Survey's done. Nice hotel but kind of boring. We started doing trips around the country. We went up into the mountains. We went to see the hot springs, the volcanoes. We went to the Amazon forests. We went to coffee plantations. We just started hiring hire cars and spending money because we had nothing to do. We literally... There was no point being at the embassy because we were underfoot at the embassy. We did our survey, we got out, I'd check in with the RSO once a day. He was busy as hell, but you know. My job wasn't to sit there and help him. Sorry. And, frankly, there wasn't much he could do either.

Things calmed down, and there was no threat in San Jose. I mean, my God, it's San Jose, Costa Rica. So we toured the country, and we had a very, very pleasant time just seeing the beauty of Costa Rica, and it truly is a beautiful country. My one regret is I did not get down to either the west coast or the east coast. Didn't get down to either. A little bit too far for a day trip.

We finally were able to make arrangements to fly out, and by the way, to show you how desperate we were, we toyed with the idea, no joke, of flying into Dallas, flying into Atlanta, flying into anywhere if we could get a rental car or two rental cars, flying into any city near the east coast and then taking rental cars back to Washington.

Eventually, we got a flight a week later, on Friday into Miami. My friend Dale Karlen was the Special Agent-in-charge of the Miami field office, DS's Miami field office. I called him and said, "How are things? He said, "You won't believe it. Absolute chaos here still." I said, "Dale, I've got five guys, including me, coming through your airport. I need a meet and assist." He said, "You got it." He sent two agents to the Miami airport to escort us through the Miami airport. They literally had to do it with their airport credentials and badges. Even my badge came in handy all of a sudden to get through the airport. There were people everywhere. Everywhere!

Now we all know Miami is the capital of Central and South America. Really. And the people were mostly stranded there from Central and South America, stranded when they got in or stranded trying to get back out.

The DS agents got us through the airport. We actually got a flight. I don't know if we had to pull strings on this or not. We did get a flight up to Washington that same day. As you can imagine, flights flying for the first time after several days of not flying are jammed. Just completely jammed, but we got home that day. It's the kind of thing you never, ever forget.

That's how we started our program. First Nassau, the Bahamas, then San Jose, Costa Rica, for the survey. We then would go not many months later up to Toronto and

Montreal. Montreal is a beautiful city. Absolutely beautiful city. Toronto struck me as any other American city, you know? Just did. Nice, but not distinctive like Montreal.

You went to school in Montreal.

*Q: I did, yes. We were there for four years, so I know it's a very pretty city.*

WILLIAMS: It's a very pretty city. Down at the waterfront, oh my word. Then eventually we'd go out to Paris. Terri and I had a great time in Paris. Terri and I had a great time in Berlin. That really was about the last time I did surveys. I didn't go overseas and do any more.

We came back, we designed these beta test site systems, the proof of concept systems, and we put a lot of effort into putting them together, and we did. One by one we started installing in the order I just told you: Nassau and San Jose first. Then we went to Toronto and Montreal. I failed to mention that while there were no Marines in Toronto and Montreal, they were true lock and leave posts, and they were true classified lock and leave posts, but they did have RSOs. Because they had DS agents there I knew I could get them to flip switches or restart something if I needed to. Ultimately, we went out to the mega-posts in Berlin and Paris where there were plenty of DS agents and large MSG detachments as well. Six posts were actually chosen: two small MSG posts, two lock-and-leave posts, and two large MSG posts. It was a good test protocol, and did in fact prove the concept.

*Q: We've had a lot of technical talk about exactly what this system was. Maybe you could explain in layman's terms – like I've heard you explain before – what it was you were actually doing and what you were able to do in Washington remotely.*

WILLIAMS: Raison d'être? Is that how you pronounce it?

*Q: Raison d'être, yeah.*

WILLIAMS: The reason for existence of the system is quite simple. Of those 270 posts that we've mentioned that the State Department maintains around the world, 120 of them are lock-and-leave posts, also euphemistically referred to as "lock and lose" posts. Those 120 lock-and-leave posts do not have Marine Security Guards. Last one out turns out the light, locks the door, and sets up the alarm system. Of the 120 lock-and-leave posts, 90 are classified lock-and-leave posts. Montreal and Toronto are classified lock-and-leave posts. What that means, quite simply, is there are classified operations; that is, national security information typically up to the secret level is processed, discussed, handled and stored at those posts. Our focus was really classified lock-and-leave posts, but the proof of concept was that we could make this work anywhere.

*Q: What you were trying to do was be able to watch or monitor, from Washington, whatever was going on at posts, even though you were not physically there.*

WILLIAMS: Correct. It was really a multi-step process. Let me just reiterate what you just said. You are exactly right, Peter. We had decided—you recall I had mentioned this earlier—that we could tunnel through OpenNet. We could tunnel through OpenNet and bring data, whatever those data were, we could bring those data through this OpenNet tunnel back to Washington. The “data” were security information, i.e., video, alarm system, access control, imminent danger notification systems – literally, almost any information can be or is being brought to Washington or other locations, as needed. In furtherance of that I went to the ITCCB meeting. The Department has an Information Technology Configuration Control Board, and it’s the Department’s configuration control board, so anything that affects OpenNet or ClassNet or any of the other Department systems has to be approved by vote of the ITCCB, and they have some 30-some members.

I did the presentation at the ITCCB to do the beta tests at six posts, and the deputy of IRM completely supported us for our beta tests. I went there, explained what we were doing, got a lot of questions, explained how we were going to handle this beta test data through the OpenNet, and we received approval for the beta tests only. After we proved the concept I would have to go back to them and get ITCCB approval for a worldwide deployment.

Your question was what we were trying to do. Specifically, we wanted to leverage equipment that was already at post. I mentioned some of these before. We wanted to connect into the digital video recorders. We wanted to connect into the State Department’s intrusion detection systems. We wanted to connect into automated access control systems if they existed at that post and we wanted to connect into the imminent danger notification system. That’s the “panic button” – the system that notifies employees to duck and cover, or evacuate, or go to safe havens. That actually would come a little bit later.

To be a SMSE post, all we had to do was connect into a post’s alarm system or intrusion detection system, and connect in its CCTV cameras, and access control if available. Connecting other aspects of the security systems were optional at that particular time. We didn’t need to connect a lot to prove the concept. We just had to get something from each of these posts, and we did. We used the field control panel that I referred to a while ago, and this is pretty technical, but we brought this data back through a system we set up using the OpenNet.

Now what makes it unique is that we have our own router and encryption devices, so what we’re doing is putting an encrypted stream, often referred to as a tunnel, through OpenNet back to another net here in Washington. We set it up initially so we could monitor these overseas systems at our operations center down in Kingstowne.

I need to stop at that point and tell you that we could see this was going to work. It became very obvious very quickly to us down in Kingstowne that...

*Q: Kingstowne, Virginia?*

WILLIAMS: Kingstowne, Virginia, at State Annex 24. It's part of the Office of Security Technology. We have an operations center. It's actually now become much more important. We now call it a network operation center because now it actually has a major network to supervise, but we could see that we could monitor these things from there. Initially we were just doing this for fun. That has to be understood. The primary responsibility was still on the post. We weren't trying to take responsibility away from them. We weren't trying to supplement them. We were trying only to prove a concept that we could do it.

We're not 24/7. We didn't have 24/7 operations in Kingstowne at the time. We do now, but we didn't then. We began formulating in our mind, if you will, that if State was going to be serious about this, if Diplomatic Security was going to be serious about this, that we were going to have to set up some sort of monitoring center to make this happen, so we did.

The short version of it goes like this: We designated the DS Command Center, which is a 24 hours a day, seven days a week operation, as the location that would monitor these facilities that we brought online from overseas. We identified how we would do it. We put together the initial type of person we wanted to do this monitoring. We got approval to fund it by contract and, by the way, it was former Marine Security Guards. The monitors down at the DS Command Center, the technical group, are almost all former Marine Security Guards, which is, if you think about it, perfect because they understand embassies, they understand ambassadors and DCMs, what our RSOs are and what security engineering officers do. They understand the whole plethora of overseas vocabulary.

By 2005—we were kind of going down parallel tracks—we were continuing to install, but slowly, systems overseas, and we were also beginning to stand up the Technical Operations Group which would be part of the Command Center. They will be the monitoring center for our activities.

In the fall of 2004, then we can skip pretty quickly forward, in the fall of 2004 I received permission from Assistant Secretary Frank Taylor to go to full deployment. I then went to the Department's Information Technology Configuration Control Board and sought approval for full worldwide deployment and use of OpenNet. Again, Dave Ames, God bless Dave Ames, much to his credit, he chaired the ITCCB, stood up and said, "I think this is extremely important, and we have to do it." With his support there was no opposition.

We went to full deployment. We went to establishing the first technical operations monitoring facility in the DS Command Center that wasn't just a concept but a place. I sought and received 1.7 million dollars in funding to build a technical operations facility in the DS Command Center. We established a network operations center in SA-24 in Kingstowne, Virginia, but we would not go 24/7. We would operate from six a.m. to six p.m., as we continued to build up.

The concept hasn't changed, but I can skip from way back then to the present fairly quickly because what we've been doing is we've simply been installing 20 to 30 or more posts per year. As I sit here today, we're now networked to 253 posts.

*Q: Wow! You said out of 270 or something like that?*

WILLIAMS: Yeah. The remaining posts, 15-20, will probably never be networked because they're generally too small. It might be something like, okay, what are the posts called in France?

*Q: The ones that have few Americans?*

WILLIAMS: APP, American Presence Posts. They have one American officer and two or three FSNs, but they don't have classified operations, and that means they also don't have the facilities to adequately protect our network nodes, and that has been fine. The prime directive has always been to protect the network because if you bring down the network, if you can spoof the network, you can bring it down, and bringing us down would be bad enough. If you brought down all of OpenNet that would be worse.

We've now extended that network to 253 posts (as of 2015), and I'm pretty sure that's probably where we'll stop. Of those 253 posts, about 100 are full Security Management System enterprise installation posts. Those are posts where we're actually monitoring intrusion detection, imminent danger notification, the camera via the DVRs, and automated access control systems. We're monitoring environmental sensors in our rooms where we have all of our equipment, and there's no end to it. I've now been told, as a matter of fact yesterday, to move ahead and in incorporating X-Ray machines, improvised explosive device units and any number of other things.

Of those remaining posts that are on the network, I think 180+ are full installations. The remainder, about 170, whatever it is, we have cameras connected, but we do not have anything else. They're slowly but surely being done by a different group; we don't do the installations.

What's interesting is that now, for the first time, from our monitoring centers to the DS Command Center here and down at Kingstowne or any number of other places on the network, if you are so privileged, if your role is such, you can go to any post in the world and see the status of their systems. We can literally go to any of the 1,000-plus digital video recorders that we have out there, go into that digital recorder remotely and see any of the 16,000 cameras that we have connected into the system. We can see real time what's going on; we can see historic videos as well. I have seen most of the video on the attacks on our posts – Jeddah, Damascus, Herat, to name but a few.

I watched attackers come over the walls in Damascus; I watched them get on the roof; I watched them throw air conditioners off the roof. It's pretty phenomenal, and of course what's interesting is the people in the embassy can see it the same way we can because

we have models of their embassy, literally models, photorealistic models, and they can fly around the models. They can go up, they can go down, they can zoom down in, they can find a camera that they want to see, click on the camera, and the camera comes up in real time.

It's an amazing system that we have built. We were doing that at the Command Center, and we're doing that down in Kingstowne as well. I can't tell you how important this capability has become to the Department and to DS. In February 2008 when Belgrade was being burned, Pat Kennedy, the Under Secretary for Management, was on the phone to the U.S. ambassador in Belgrade who was at home, who was telling Pat things were not as bad as he thought they were. Well, Pat was telling the ambassador while watching TV, while watching our cameras, that his embassy was on fire and that they had gotten into his embassy by crawling through the second story windows. The ambassador couldn't believe he knew that. How could he know that?

*Q: Did the ambassador know that?*

WILLIAMS: No. No. Pat had open line to the ambassador. He's watching this take place because we have ported over to the State Operations Center on their video; we've moved cameras. All the important cameras we've moved over there for the Ops Center people. In this case it turned out Pat was there as well, Ops Center people could watch real time what was going on out in Belgrade. Stunning. Absolutely stunning. Pat Kennedy is a firm believer in this system, I can assure you.

*Q: I bet, yeah.*

WILLIAMS: We have captured just about every attack in the last five, six, seven years from Jeddah to Belgrade to Damascus to Casa Blanca to, most recently, Herat in Afghanistan. We've captured almost everything for use. By the way, we packaged these things and it's moved up to the Secretary as part of the morning briefing. It's really a pretty phenomenal capability.

As I say, we have some 250 posts networked. About 75% of them have complete installations. We're chugging along at about 20 to 30 a year to complete the installations, and now we're looking in other directions, other things we can do with the system. We really don't have all the capabilities yet. It's got way more capability than we have imagination, let's put it that way. We will be sharing with the military combatant commands. We will be sharing our system with them, but we will be controlling the system from here. They will not have actual control, which is how we do it with the State Operations Center.

*Q: That sounds like a truly amazing system. What a nice retirement project to be involved in, although I think it's exaggerated to call it a retirement project. You've been at this about ten years or so.*

WILLIAMS: Eleven years! Eleven years, and I can tell you in all honesty I've never gotten bored with it. *[Interviewee's note: Fifteen years, at the time of editing the oral transcript. However, in the last couple of these 15 years, I have branched out to a couple of other projects and enjoy helping with them.]*

At the same time I've been doing something else for 11 years *[Note: now 15 years]* and that is I've been simultaneously taking time to teach analytical risk management. Initially, I was teaching it with Booze Alan Hamilton, and then I started teaching it directly with American University as an adjunct professor, and I've gone through three or four renditions of courses with them. I've taught two graduate courses for them. I've taught innumerable week long ATA programs with them where I had an entire day for just analytical risk management. These were all senior foreign national officials and part of a senior level one-week crisis management seminar. Very rewarding but by the end of the day very tiring.

*Q: ATA?*

WILLIAMS: Sorry, sorry. Sorry, Diplomatic Security's Anti-Terrorism Assistance program. They fund police or public safety officials to come to the United States, and the seminar I was teaching was the crisis management seminar to try to give them some sense of how we do things here, just ideas, because I don't think any of us believe that we're so much better than anybody else. However, sometimes the sharing of approaches and opinions can be quite helpful.

*Q: Let me stop you for a moment. Who were you teaching? Were these American students?*

WILLIAMS: No, these were all foreign nationals. Let me back up. The two graduate level courses that I taught up there were for American students. They were for more senior police officers of Fairfax County, Alexandria, and Falls Church police departments. This was a master's program for them that had been put together by American University. One of the courses I taught was analytical risk management, and to do it at graduate level was fascinating because I could send them out to do real, *real* assessments, and of course that was always interesting because they usually came back so appalled and so scared they couldn't believe how bad everything was. Our Washington-area infrastructure is seriously at risk.

Do you know the oil farm down on 95 south? Take I-95 south out of D.C.?

*Q: I personally don't, but I've heard the story before.*

WILLIAMS: I sent them down to this oil farm, which happens to furnish the necessary jet fuel and other fuels to Reagan and Dulles airports, and there a large number of huge tanks down there. I had some rules for them. They could not travel in a marked police car, and they could not wear uniforms, and they could not initially display their police IDs. They walked right into this oil farm, walked around for half an hour before this lady,

I have this vision of the shotgun-toting lady, came out of the trailer and said, “What are you all doing here?” But by then it would have been too late. It would have been too late. They were astounded how easy it would have been to put explosives on the side of the tanks down there and blow them all up.

I used to teach the same course to Diplomatic Security, to RSO classes, before they were going overseas. Everybody thinks they know how to determine threat. Nobody has the methodology for doing it. All this is is a process. It’s a methodology – both a qualitative and quantitative means – for determining risk for most any asset – a person, place or thing. Once you determine risk, you can address it.

I taught Americans at the graduate level and foreign nationals.

*Q: Foreign nationals who were brought in as part of a State Department program?*

WILLIAMS: The State Department sponsored the program for foreign nationals. This was this kind of an emergency action seminar that we would teach. Then I continued to teach two-and-a-half or three hour blocks of instruction to another ATA program, a totally separate ATA program. That seems to be the appropriate amount of instruction for them, so that I continued to do it, and very much enjoyed it.

*Q: These are evening programs?*

WILLIAMS: No, they’re day programs. I take leave. I have to take leave, and that’s okay. It’s so much fun to teach these things, and I so enjoy it, and I so enjoy the students and the questions that you get in the interplay. We had careers in foreign affairs, and it’s fun to have this kind of interaction with foreign nationals because we have a much better sense of how they think and how we shouldn’t think, so it’s fun to share and exchange, and not from the arrogant American point of view, shall we say.

*Q: Being a teacher is also a learning experience as well.*

WILLIAMS: Isn’t it?

*Q: It is, yes.*

WILLIAMS: It is fun, so I wish I were doing more. I’d almost like to retire to do just that, just teach at American University, but it’s too unpredictable. That uncertainty principle kicks in again, as to whether they’re going to get funded. When you depend on the State Department for your funding, you’ve got a problem.

*Q: Yeah, especially in this day and age.*

WILLIAMS: That kind of brings us up to the present in terms of professional responsibilities.

*Q: That's a fascinating end. As you were saying, that brings us to the present time. There are probably more adventures to come. Maybe we should have waited on this oral history until you really did actually retire, but let me ask if there's anything more you want to say before we close.*

WILLIAMS: Amazingly I was just sitting here thinking of somewhere, and it takes me all the way back to Haiti and all the trips overseas. Somewhere in there I found the time, the State Department paid for a master's degree, and I managed to it while going to Haiti and going to Germany. I really worked on it, but now I look at it and I think, "God, a good thing I was much younger back then."

[laughter]

WILLIAMS: Much younger. I can remember sitting in Germany. The sun was still up at 10:00 p.m., you know how that works in Europe, with my laptop such as it was. It was an old Apple Mac laptop back in the day, writing a paper, thinking, "Why won't the sun go down? I want to go to bed."

Enough of that. That brings us up to present, and the present is interesting. I've truly enjoyed every bit of my Foreign Service career. Part of the time I am amazed at myself. Who would have thought that a kid out of Freeport, Illinois, surrounded by farmland, would somehow figure out that going in the military was a good thing and getting overseas was a great thing, with a taste for languages and foreign travel. It turned out to be the way I wanted it to go for a much greater portion of my life, slowly but surely finding my way over to Foreign Service, finding my way to DS from army intelligence, then being reasonably successful in a career with Diplomatic Security, loving every minute of it but still feeling challenged up to the present. I enjoy being out.

In retrospect, I did not find the private sector particularly rewarding, and I think I've said that to others over and over again. I just came home at the end of the day and didn't find that I had job satisfaction. After a while I realized that I didn't like it. I really didn't like it. It wasn't so much how much money I made, but rather that I felt like what I did with the Foreign Service was good and maybe helped others. Maybe that sounds a little simplistic or silly or whatever, but I think those of us who have been in the Foreign Service or in public service, if you will, do take a certain amount of gratification from trying to do the right thing. Yes, there is a measure of altruism.

It's been a great life. I enjoyed my boat out in the Chesapeake. I plan on doing fun things for a number of years, and looking back with a smile. When I look back, I look back and really do nothing but smile and would not change or trade this in, for anything.

Thank you, Peter.

*Q: It's been fascinating. Thank you for sharing, Denny.*

*[Editor's note: Dennis Williams passed away on November 4, 2016, prior to completing his edits to this interview. The editing was completed by the interviewer, Peter Eicher.]*

*End of interview*