BOSNIA - HERZEGOVINA

COUNTRY READER
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Wade Matthews	1987-1992	Inspection Corps, State Department, Washington, DC
Margaret D. Tutwiler	1989	Spokesperson, State Department, Washington, DC
Robert Rackmales	1989-1993	Deputy Chief of Mission, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
James K. Bishop Jr.	1991-1993	Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, State Department, Washington, DC
Robert M. Beecroft	1991-1994	U.S. Mission to NATO, Brussels, Belgium
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Marshall Freeman Harris	1992 1993	CSCE Monitor, Macedonia Political Officer, Bosnia Desk, Washington, DC
J.D. Bindenagel	1992-1994	Office Director- Central Europe, State Department, Washington, DC
Frank G. Wisner	1992-1994	Under-Secretary of State for International Security Affairs, State Department, Washington, DC
George F. Ward Jr.	1992-1996	Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary-International Organizations, State Department, Washington, DC
David R. Adams	1993-1995	Office of the Undersecretary of State,

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Rudolf V. Perina	1993-1996	Chargé d'Affaires, Belgrade, Yugoslavia
Carl F. Inderfurth	1993-1997	U.S. Representative for Special Political Affairs/Deputy U.S. Representative on U.N. Security Council, United Nations, New York
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Marshall P. Adair	2002-2003	Political Advisor to the U.S. Forces, Tuzla
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DAVID E. MARK
Yugoslavia Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1954-1957)

Ambassador David E. Mark graduated from Columbia University in 1943. Shortly

after completing a year of law school, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. Near the end of World War II, Ambassador Mark joined the Foreign Service. He served in Korea, Romania, Switzerland, Burundi, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Henry Precht on July 28, 1989.

Q: And this is your first assignment to Washington?

MARK: First assignment to Washington. And, of course, it was a time in which I learned a great deal, and particularly because the Yugoslav desk was one of the most active in the Department at the time. And that was because John Foster Dulles, as Secretary, envisaged Tito as the soft underbelly of the Soviet empire in Europe, envisaged Tito as a means for corrupting and getting Western influence into the East European camp. Of course, Tito had defected from Stalin, so to speak, in '48, '49. It had taken us several years to accept the fact that he was a genuine defector, and then to begin the process of establishing relations with him, of using him for our purposes, but at the same time providing him with the support that he needed to keep going--economic support and military support. We got heavily into supplying Tito with aircraft and with military technology and so forth. But there was a lot of opposition to our policy of supporting Tito, before I arrived in Washington, and this opposition, particularly in '53, had been promoted in a way by Clare Boothe Luce, who was our Ambassador to Italy at the time and who was backing Italy in a very difficult struggle over ownership of the Trieste territory. I mean, this was almost a "casus belli" between Italy and Yugoslavia. We were doing our best to negotiate some sort of solution, and we ultimately succeeded, but we had to browbeat Tito, and naturally, it didn't sit well with Mrs. Luce and others that we were supporting Tito at the same time, even on the military side.

At that point, Yugoslavia was still a fairly classical communist regime, and Tito had a cult of personality a mile long. But nonetheless, our strategic interest in using him and John Foster Dulles' vision of how he might prove valuable to us was predominant in our policy. The policy not only didn't have unanimous support in the Congress or in the country, it didn't have all that much support in the State Department, either. I would say that among the people between Mr. Dulles as the Secretary and me as the lowly desk officer--and there were a lot of people and layers between us--there was almost no support.

Under Secretary Robert Murphy at the time had an understanding for what Dulles was trying to do, but his own innate anti-communist feelings were so strong that he wasn't all that sympathetic to the effort. He was just understanding of it and ready to follow the Secretary's orders. The Assistant Secretary for European affairs and his deputies were not understanding at all. In any event, matters--

Q: Did Dulles then stand alone with you against--

MARK: Well, that's what it came to by 1955. The situation deteriorated--that is, in terms of U.S. policy--because Tito, who had by now established pretty clearly that he was going it alone and was able to do so, didn't want the tension that had existed with Stalin to be continued. So he began making overtures to the new Soviet leader, Khrushchev, first to Malenkov and then to Khrushchev.

This culminated sometime in mid-'55 in a Khrushchev visit to Belgrade, and, of course, Khrushchev said all kinds of things to try to entice Tito back into the fold, or at least to act in friendly fashion, and the more that Khrushchev talked, the worse it looked for our policy of using Tito as a fifth column within the Soviet camp, and the more that opposition developed to the whole approach. This meant that the lack of support in the State Department itself became more important.

As the support diminished in the government and in the Congress, I felt that implementation of Dulles' policy was becoming weaker and weaker, and that something drastic had to be done to reverse the trend. This was, oh, sort of late spring, summer of 1955. Something drastic had to be done to redeem the relationship, and I felt that we had to send some very high-level person to Yugoslavia. So I wrote--it was in May or June, I think--a memo to Dulles, through the proper channels of course, urging that a mission be launched and urging also that it be the Army Chief of Staff, General Lawton Collins, I believe at the time, to do it.

Q: Why did you prefer a military representative?

MARK: I thought that he was someone to whom Tito would listen, since he had that background in European affairs. It would impress Tito with our seriousness. Also military supply was one of the key issues, i.e., whether we were going to keep up our military supply, given the charges that Tito was now headed back toward Moscow's camp.

Q: But was there a military threat that we were dealing with, or was this just reassurance for Yugoslav independence from the Soviet Union?

MARK: Well, I think--you mean the reassurance--

Q: I mean the military supply was a symbolic gesture on our part, wasn't it?

MARK: Oh, no. It was important. I mean the Soviet armies were poised. There's something known to defenders of Western Europe, and particularly northern Italy, as the Ljubljana Gap, Ljubljana being the capital of the Yugoslav republic of Slovenia. And this is apparently a fairly level area that has been the path of invasions many times. The Soviets were in a position to overrun it fairly readily, so that our building up Yugoslav forces, and tanks were involved, as well as artillery, was not a gesture. It was serious business.

Anyway, it was a critical time. I had seen Dulles before. I had been at meetings in his office on Yugoslav affairs. With this memo, he took to dealing with me fairly often on a direct basis. He would just phone down and ask me up or ask for something. I remember once being called up there and his brother, Allen Dulles, head of the CIA, was also present, and we were soon discussing the issues.

Q: That was rather extraordinary, wasn't it?

MARK: It was pretty heady stuff.

Q: He didn't consult many junior or middle-grade officers, did he?

MARK: No. It was pretty heady stuff, I must say. And, of course, the other people in my office knew about it, so that it was, you know, it was appreciated that at least Dulles liked the kind of policy line I was taking. And I, frankly, thought his strategic point of view made great sense in terms of supporting Tito, if not because he was going to be an effective fifth column in Eastern Europe, then at least because he would be a symbol of how a communist state could make it on its own and could develop independent ideas. I mean, the Yugoslavs were already beginning to develop some ideological heresies, such as factory management by workers and government decentralization in some economic matters. It wasn't really very much. It didn't convince ex-Tito ally, Milovan Djilas, who wrote the heretic book, The New Class, exposing fully the huge perquisites of the Communist Party apparatus. It didn't affect that. But nevertheless, it was a change, and Yugoslavs soon began tourism to Western Europe, which people in the Moscow satellites soon learned about.

Well, in any case, after much ado, Dulles decided to send Robert Murphy, not Lawton Collins, over to deal with Tito, and we made preparations for the Murphy trip. I was to go along, of course, and I was to carry a special diplomatic bag which had some documents for Tito, including a letter signed by Dwight Eisenhower that I had drafted inviting Tito to come to the United States. But while I was on the train in Italy, before I even got into Yugoslavia, Eisenhower came down with his ileitis attack, his intestinal attack, and was very ill. So it was decided that we couldn't--we didn't know what was going to happen to Ike--and so we couldn't deliver the letter. So that was scrapped for the time being.

Q: Still, such an invitation, I would think, would not sit well with a lot of Yugoslav émigré societies in this country.

MARK: It didn't. I haven't mentioned the Yugoslav émigré situation. I mean, they were on top of us all the time, and, indeed, the main effort of the Yugoslav secret police representatives at Tito's embassy in Washington was to keep track of the émigrés in the U.S. and to nourish pro-Tito cliques.

We particularly had one case in California. I think the man's name was Artukovic, who had been a Minister of the Interior in the rump Croatian separatist state that Hitler had set up, and who had executed many thousands of people, or who at least had approved their execution. He was in the States and we tried to extradite him to Belgrade and this provoked a terrible court battle. I think he was finally extradited as a very old man to Yugoslavia in 1988. He's been on trial there. Maybe it was 1987. That was a sideline, but it was an extremely complex matter, which took a desk officer's time, a lot of a desk officers' time.

But anyway, to get back to our meeting in Belgrade, Murphy handled it very skillfully, as he always did, a consummate diplomat. Our ambassador was James Riddleberger, one of the most senior ambassadors at that time in the Foreign Service, who later became the administrator of what's now AID abroad. And I think Tito understood our point of view pretty well and understood better the balancing act that he had to carry out in view of U.S. domestic pressures.

Q: Did you attend the meeting with Tito?

MARK: No. I didn't attend the meeting with Tito. I flew back with Murphy in his plane to Paris--this was the plane that General Norstad, who was then the Air Force Chief of Staff, had put at our disposal--he was chief of staff or Air Force commander in Europe, one or the other--and just before Paris, the pilot announced that the landing gear of the plane would not come down, or at least that the light wouldn't go on saying that it had come down, or maybe it wasn't locked in place, or whatever.

So we circled Paris for about 45 or 50 minutes, and Murphy got to reminisce about how he, as a young man, and trained in the law too, like me, had made the decision to join the Foreign Service. And he'd given up fortune--didn't have very much by way of it now, but had really had a fantastic life. I mean, during the war he'd landed by submarine in North Africa--and so he was very glad that he had chosen the Foreign Service as a career. You know, it was all very nice to be a lawyer, but that was pretty prosaic compared with the opportunities that he had had.

Q: What's your estimation of Murphy? How did he shape up?

MARK: I think he was an extraordinarily skillful diplomat, I mean negotiator. I mean, and not just because he was Irish that he could charm the bejesus off anyone. Even if he had been of Greek ancestry, he could have done it in Belgrade. He was just extraordinarily talented in dealing with people and in playing his cards in practical situations. I saw no evidence that he was a great strategic thinker, though I may be wrong. He wasn't particularly appreciative of Dulles' policy toward Yugoslavia, but he carried out his instructions earnestly and very capably when he had to do so.

I should add that the landing gear turned out to be perfectly okay. It was just the signal light that hadn't worked, and so we landed safety in Paris without any further trouble.

It wasn't the last of my connections with Murphy in the case of Yugoslavia, because 1956 was an election year, a presidential election year; Ike was running for reelection. And the leader of the Republicans in the Senate at the time was Senator William Knowland of California, who was strongly against Dulles' policy of playing up to Tito. This was just before the Russians invaded Hungary.

But, in any event, during the summer of 1956, the AID bill was up in the Senate, and Knowland was opposing the Yugoslav part of it. And so Murphy and I went up to Philadelphia one day to go to the old Bellevue Stratford Hotel in the middle of the city to spend two hours in a smoke-filled room with the senator, sort of arguing out the terms under which State Department policy towards Yugoslavia would be allowed to continue. We got a certain degree of freedom of action, we got some aid, but there were also all kinds of conditions laid down by Knowland which we felt obliged to accept.

Q: Did he--Knowland--feel strongly himself on anti-communist grounds, or was he responding to the Republican right, or to ethnic groups, or all of the above?

MARK: All of the above. All of the above. I should say that the issue had come up again of a Tito visit to Washington by this time. Knowland was against it and we scrubbed it. But, before this had happened, I had drafted another letter of invitation. I revised the first letter, and Dulles got Ike to sign it, and it was sent over to Tito, inviting him to the States. I guess Knowland knew about it. I mean, he got us to kill any visit at that time.

We killed it by putting on such conditions of implementing the visit that we knew Tito couldn't accept. We were going to limit his stay to three days in the States, and so forth and he wanted much more, so he canceled it. He did come later in Ike's term in '59. After all, by that time we had had Khrushchev in Washington, so why not have Tito?

But there was one other aspect of it. The fact of the existence of the invitation letter had leaked out, and Joe McCarthy was still going in the Senate at the time, although he was not the powerful Joe of a few years earlier. And he said to Dulles, "I know, Mr. Secretary, that you didn't write that letter yourself, that you didn't send it. So who was the commie fink inside the State Department who did all that for you?"

And Dulles said, "Well, of course I didn't write it myself, but I protect my people and I'm not telling you who it was who did that, who wrote that letter." As it happened, the letter had gone to Belgrade at a time when Dulles was in the hospital. I think it was his first bout with cancer. And since he had been in the hospital then, he said to McCarthy, "Well, naturally I was in the hospital at the time, and maybe if I had known about it I wouldn't have let the letter go up to the President for signature. But I'm standing by it and I'm not telling you who it was."

Well, of course, that was just an out-and-out lie. He had been in the hospital to be sure, but the letter had gone to him in the hospital. Not only had it gone, but he had fiddled with the language of the operative paragraph of the invitation, so that he had gotten the nuances to sound exactly as he wanted before it went to the White House.

Q: Are you saying that John Foster Dulles wasn't the militant anti-communist that he's sometimes thought to be?

MARK: Oh, I think he was a militant anti-communist. He saw the merit of using fire to fight fire, and he thought of Tito, as I said earlier, he thought of him as the means of undermining the Soviet position in Eastern Europe. Of course, the crisis in Hungary was going on at the time, late 1956. This was just before that, this was some months before, but the tendencies with Imre Nagy in Hungary were very clear. And so Dulles was not above telling a little white lie about his involvement with this letter at the time that the thing was sent.

And, as a matter of fact, when the Russians later invaded Hungary, when Dulles' policy was succeeding only too well there and in Poland, and in Eastern Europe generally, we decided not to back the anti-communist up at all. We wouldn't even release some rifles that we had in Vienna to the Hungarian rebels. I remember working all night once in the State Department in October of '56 when the crisis was on. The White House made the decision right then and there that there would be no military backing for the anti-communist fighters.

Q: Some people in the State Department were pushing to send them weapons across the line?

MARK: I think there was some pressure, but Dulles wouldn't do it either despite prior speeches about "rolling back the Iron Curtain." And, of course, Tito was scared to death at this time. There was a secret--I don't know whether it's still secret or not--but there was a communication of his to Eisenhower at the time in which he asked for a military security guarantee from the United States in case the Soviet Union, driving through Hungary, invaded Yugoslavia, and we gave it to him. Ike gave it to him.

Q: In writing?

MARK: No, I don't think so. I think it was all verbal, but we responded positively.

Q: Do you think we would have maintained our word on this?

MARK: I think we probably would have. I mean, we just considered that that's where the Iron Curtain was at the time and one didn't allow the Iron Curtain to be moved because it could have had all kinds of implications for the politics and morale of Western Europe.

I should note here one other sidelight. I pleaded in 1955 to have a U.S. consulate general established in Sarajevo, Bosnia, because with its ethnic mixture, that city seemed like a microcosm of the country as a sensitive sounding board. And I got my way in 1956, but the new outpost was unfortunately closed down late in the 1960s during one of the State Department's periodic budget crises.

Well, I think I stayed on the Yugoslav desk only a little while after that, because in mid-1957 I was assigned to Moscow at long last.

STEPHEN E. PALMER JR.
Political Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1954-1957)

Political Officer
Sarajevo, Yugoslavia (1957-1959)

Stephen E. Palmer, Jr. was born in Superior, Wisconsin on July 31, 1923. He received a bachelor's degree from Princeton University and served in the U.S. Marine Corps. His Foreign Service career included positions in Nicosia, Belgrade, Sarajevo, Tel Aviv, London, Islamabad, Madras, Geneva, and Washington, DC. Mr. Palmer was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 31, 1995.

Q: Did there seem to be, because of what's happening right today in Bosnia, did Bosnia-Herzegovina seem to be a problem, or not at that time?

PALMER: Let me answer it by this. Various people back in Washington had advocated the establishment of another consulate in the country, and the embassy was asked to comment on whether it should be in Skopje, there were those who supported that; or in Sarajevo. And I, and eventually the ambassador and the embassy as a whole, agreed that Sarajevo was the best place for two reasons. One, it was where the nationality question loomed largest; and two, it was where a lot of defense related enterprises were being established. The old partisan concept of having things in the mountains. So Sarajevo was determined, and it was largely because it was deemed to be the best place to observe the continuing playing out of the nationality question.

Q: Normally, this seemed to be fought out in the field of linguistics. They would have a meeting of academics of the Balkans who they would try to get together. It seemed to fall apart because is Macedonia a language or not, or a dialect. You moved to Sarajevo where you were from '57 to '59. How were living conditions in Sarajevo?

PALMER: Not bad. The consulate and the consul's quarters were in the same rather large, and very old, pre-Victorian building. I guess it had been someone's mansion at one time. It was turned into a museum after we closed the post. It was on a hill fairly close to the center of town, everything worked, and we had very pleasant quarters. As far as living conditions, creature comforts, it was a pleasant place to be.

Q: When you went out there, Riddleberger was still the ambassador?

PALMER: Yes. Rankin became ambassador shortly thereafter.

Q: What were your instructions when you went out there? What were you going to do?

PALMER: I don't recall having any. I had been sort of the driving force for setting up the post so I guess they figured I knew what to do. What I remember is a, let us know when we can help sort of attitude. I had a vice consul, his wife was our secretary, that was the American staff. Besides a driver, I think we had three foreign service nationals. It was not a visa issuing post, so most of our work was reporting and with a goodly amount of social security and VA check-up work, and many, many visits to villages to ascertain whether old so-and-so was still alive.

Q: ...told you, take me to your marble monument, a phrase I have learned. Everybody was buried under marble until you went out there it looked awfully like cement. Were you finding a different perspective by being out there?

PALMER: Yes, I think so. For one thing it was possible to be on relatively close personal terms with really all of the key leaders. One bit of advice, which was given to me by a newspaperman, who later became head of the winter Olympics Committee, was to become a hunter and a fisherman for the first time in my life. I bought the equipment and when they found out I would like to go on hunting trips, or fishing trips--mostly hunting, I was invited to almost every one, and these were really the movers and shakers of Bosnia-Herzegovina, almost without exception they were hunters. So the camaraderie of going out in the afternoon and sleeping in a bunked room, and getting up before dawn and having breakfast of slivovitz and meat pie and then going

out to shoot wild boar; one becomes a little close, and I think I was able to extract -- I think there was a mutual frankness that one could not have acquired just with normal field trips.

Q: You meet somebody, and then you're on to the next appointment.

PALMER: It was harder in Montenegro which was part of our district just because I wasn't living there, but I think we had the Bosnia-Herzegovina situation pretty well taped.

Q: How did you see the political situation in that area?

PALMER: The nationality situation?

Q: Yes, the political situation.

PALMER: Well, on the one hand one saw intermarriage, mixed neighborhoods, an absence of any pronounced violence. On the other hand we saw in little newspapers, including often sometimes religious periodicals, evidence that so-and-so had been sentenced to umpteen years because of bad mouthing another nationality group, it was usually Muslims who were sentenced. Sometimes Serbs for bad mouthing Muslims, but usually it was Muslims for bad mouthing the Tito government. So obviously there was a bubbling of animosities. But at that time, of course, one didn't foresee how much the Tito type of government would devolve and fragment. If one had, I guess I wouldn't have been as optimistic as I was at the time about the eventual damping down of these old animosities.

Q: What had the Muslims done during the war? Had they been used against the Orthodox?

PALMER: Some had been used by the Ustashi against the Serbs, the Orthodox. A lot had gone with Tito. But the partisan units had large Muslim elements, very few came out in extremely senior positions, but some of them did. And certainly people like Djuro Pucar, the president, and Osman Karabegovic the number two man, they both were partisans. Karabegovic was one of the most prominent Muslims of the revolution. His wife also had fought with Tito's Partisans. When my wife called on Mm. Karabegovic, the latter displayed a scar from a bullet which had hit her just under a breast. In those two years, and I think Nick Andrews who succeeded me in Sarajevo would agree, we did not perceive any strong divisions within the party apparatus on the basis of nationality.

Q: I don't have a feel for the situation today, but there's a certain feeling that Sarajevo was the cosmopolitan place where people were intermarrying. Whereas in the old days we would call them sort of hillbillies who were off in the hills, this is where the animosities were kept alive, but these would be the equivalent to what I guess we'd call them red necks today, that one wouldn't meet either politically or socially.

PALMER: I think you have a very good point there, and certainly despite what we were able to accomplish on a personal relationship basis on the republic level, we certainly didn't have anything like that in Travnik, or Bosanska Gradiska, or Mostar where I spent quite a bit of time. The latter was fairly cosmopolitan and open-minded. Of course, you had about half Serb and half

Croat with a sprinkling of Muslims. No, but I think that's a good point. People in the villages who hadn't moved and its become obvious a lot of them were living in the past.

Q: As you traveled around were you aware of the Yugoslav preparations for a war, essentially I guess against the Soviets, but using Bosnia as a mountain redoubt.

PALMER: That was our assumption. It made no economic sense to establish defense industries in these almost inaccessible places. So that was part of the mystique.

Q: I found myself one time doing a field trip, that the foreign ministry had set up and all of a sudden in a place and it was supposedly a cellulose factory, and I realized when I got in, half way through, that every question I was asking, it was a munitions factory. But they called it a cellulose factory and all I wanted to do was get the hell out of there before it blew up.

When Carl Rankin came did you get any feel for his tenure there?

PALMER: No. We had a pleasant visit and I introduced him to the people in power. We had a good talk. He wanted to know if there was anything more they needed to do to support us. No, I didn't get any feel for his overall stewardship in the mission.

Q: Were there any major events while you were there with Yugoslav relations with the United States, or else even in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro?

PALMER: No, it was very calm. It was quiet in that sense. Perhaps it was because we were the only post from any country in the city and the area. We never had that kind of a rumor mill.

Q: Usually diplomats feed off each other.

PALMER: Right. We were it.

Q: What were you getting on these hunting trips, and other times, from the local leaders at the republican level as far as how they looked upon Tito.

PALMER: Well, none of them spoke out of school in terms of the national leadership. What I was able to perceive was a realization that their then economic system was inefficient and a hankering to try something else, but without going all the way to free market capitalism, and the whole idea of worker management was beginning to bubble up. I put my vice consul mainly in charge of the economic reporting. What we perceived was a lot of stumbling around in terms of this worker management concept and unhappiness on the part of the old party faithful who had been paid off for their wartime experience by being made managers, and were now having their authority diluted, or perhaps being let go. So there was that what I would say sociological unrest. I remember the mayor of Sarajevo very well, Ljubo Kojo, he's the one whom I put on the path of securing the old Washington trolley cars, the first in Sarajevo, or at least the first modern ones there. I remember he was always asking me about how things worked in this country, trying to think how to adapt his management of city affairs more efficiently and more fairly. So one could do a little bit of missionary work. They were receptive to that.

Q: Did we have a USIS establishment there?

PALMER: No, that came after the consulate was closed.

Q: How about when you were in Belgrade and Sarajevo, was Milovan Djilas a figure to play with?

PALMER: Oh, very much. I regret that I never called on him. As I recall I was discouraged from doing so by my superiors at the embassy. I lived when we first moved into Belgrade in temporary quarters for some months, I lived right across the street from him. I used to see him going out on walks. I always regret that I never had any personal contact with him.

Q: Was he somebody to whom people would refer to as far as his thoughts about the new class, and the stratification of the communist society?

PALMER: Yes, in hushed tones and mostly if they were members of the ancien regime.

Q: When you left Sarajevo in 1959, what were your thoughts whither Yugoslavia at that time?

PALMER: I was basically optimistic that the nationality problems could be further eased. And this was assuming that the power structure of the country remained about the same. That is, a relatively benevolent dictatorship centrally controlled, and that the big changes would be on the economic front with a degree not of capitalism, but a system with some profit motive involved. I was optimistic.

Q: When I left in '67 I was too. What about communism as a belief of philosophy? What was your impression of how well that was taking?

PALMER: Well, I had become convinced in my initial research and nothing in my almost five years there dissuaded me that the reason a lot of communists were communists was because of the nationality question, and particularly because of the great Serb hegemony over the country in the inter-war period. And this was certainly true on the part of a lot of the Croatian communists, and Macedonian communists, and Bosnian communists. As you well know, despite the atrocities of which the Tito people were guilty during the war, and shortly after the war, it became a relatively benevolent form of communism. They only became tough when influential people, people in positions of economic or political power began to question too deeply.

Q: I can understand why the Yugoslav would say, okay, because I think we felt this way too, that at least this is a unifying thing. I mean, American policy was essentially that Yugoslavia wanted to stay outside the Soviet orbit, and too, it doesn't fall apart because we'd end up in a war there because of the Soviet presence which would take advantage of that. So Titoism seemed to make, from our point of view, an awful lot of sense. But other than that were you finding that the Yugoslavs that you'd meet in positions of authority believed in the tenets of communism, or was it just a means to an end?

PALMER: This is too global an assessment, but I would say more of the latter than the former. And particularly the intellectuals whom diplomats tended to meet. They were as unregimented mentally as any people in western Europe.

Q: It never really took the way it did in the Soviet Union. It never even approached that degree.

PALMER: I think that's a fair statement.

NICHOLAS G. ANDREWS
Consular Officer
Sarajevo, Yugoslavia (1959-1961)

Yugoslavia Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1962-1965)

Nicholas G. Andrews was born in 1924 in Romania and came to live in Massachusetts fifteen years later. He attended Princeton University and served in the Army. He entered the Foreign Service in 1950. His overseas posts include Yugoslavia, Turkey; and he twice served in Poland. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 12, 1990.

Q: *I'd like to go back to the Romanian period because this is really just about our first contact, wasn't it, with the Soviets and what was going to happen in Eastern Europe, 1944-46. What was your impression? You were obviously a young man but you were watching this happen.*

ANDREWS: It's very difficult to reconstruct what it was that I was thinking in those days. I was aware of the fact that the OSS had sent people in to Romania as early as August 1944 when King Michael and some of his democratic associates pulled a coup against General Antonesen, the authoritarian ruler, and committed Romania to join the allies, and to get out of its treaty with the Germans. The OSS people were around and were sort of rather heroic in my eyes because they had come in so early, and therefore in the very exciting period, in fact before the Russians got to Bucharest. But by the time I got there, in December before Christmas, there seemed to be a pattern already established. There was an armistice commission, that is to say a commission of the three major allies, the Soviet Union, the British, and the U.S., who were supposed to enforce the armistice conditions, and the U.S. military representation was about 50 to 70 officers and men. The British had perhaps a few more. And, of course, the Russians were all over the country. The Generals in charge of the military, ours, the British, and the Russians, met regularly. In our small interpreter group of four people, we had two that translated to and from Russian, as well as two who did Romanian, and all four of us could do French. We had one of these Russian-speaking Poles. I think he came down to Sarajevo once, to hunt, which a lot of western diplomats like to do there, and I can't remember now making any very special arrangements. Those were usually made between Belgrade and Sarajevo. He didn't stay with us. I think they put him up at either a hotel or a lodge belonging to the Bosnian heads of government. I can't even remember

precisely whether he had breakfast with us, because sometimes even when everything was arranged, they did come by and have breakfast with us.

But Rankin didn't play much of a role in my life, either as Consul or while I was in Belgrade. Kennan came--I suppose that would have been 1960.

Q: Probably '61, because Kennedy put him there.

ANDREWS: Okay, and he came in with...well, I think the Embassy was delighted, and he was very active, very busy. He came down to Sarajevo while I was there, and I set up the usual protocol meetings with so and so, and so and so, which were dull, I think, from his point of view considering the persons with whom he had spoken in other Republics, or in Belgrade. I think Bosnia leaders did not stand out very much, although I had a somewhat higher regard for the Prime Minister, than for the other people. He was still no great shakes compared to his counterparts in other Republics. So it was a protocolary kind of visit. There was a Czech built ski lift type thing, but which wasn't used for skis--well, yes, you could carry your skis on it, but it was more a sight-seeing thing. We went up on that, took one or two pictures of views of Sarajevo. I don't even remember if we did a party for him. We would have normally done some kind of a reception, but that doesn't stick in my mind.

But I remember wondering--wishing--that I could remember everything he said, because it seemed to me from the very first time he opened his mouth, what he said was interesting. And, of course, I didn't remember a single thing he said. We didn't only talk about Yugoslavia. And his wife came down with him, and we thought that she was very interesting too.

Q: To sort of tie this in with my own personal experience, one day in about 1963 Ambassador Kennan called me in, when I was chief of the consular section in Belgrade, and asked me from the consular point of view, could we survive without Sarajevo. I said, "Certainly. We had very little work there, so obviously I can't judge from a political reporting perspective, but we could certainly pick up all the consular work from Sarajevo without blinking an eye, and no extra staff." And whatever it was, George Kennan shut the post down. You were at the other end I take it?

ANDREWS: No, I wasn't because I was in the middle. Steve Palmer opened it, I think, in '57, and ran it to '59. I had '59 to '61, Charlie Stout, '61 to '63, and I think Bob Shakleford came in '63-'64, something like that.

Q: Sometime around there it was shut down.

ANDREWS: In '61 there wasn't the question of shutting it down. It was perfectly true to say that it was not a consular post dealing with consular work as such. There was very little visa business, a couple of passports once in a while. There were some Americans of Montenegrin descent who had returned to Montenegro, and occasionally had to deal with their passports, or the children they begot as the result of second marriages. There was no property protection, there was no shipping and seamen, or anything of that kind. There were a couple of fleet visits which were very nice. I got to go down to Dubrovnik. Bosnia, of course, has no outlet, or at least has a sort of

an outlet on the Adriatic, but it was constructed by Tito, and the communists. It didn't have a natural outlet historically in the Adriatic.

But I argued with O'Shaughnessy, and others apparently supported me, that if I was going to try and deal with the Republic of Montenegro, as well as Bosnia, and I was going to keep on going out of my district through Dubrovnik to get to Montenegro, shouldn't I at least have Dubrovnik in my bailiwick. Because the rules of the game were, when you left your consular district you had to notify somebody in the State Department, and of course, if I kept on going out via Dubrovnik into Montenegro, I had to keep notifying, and wasn't this silly. So O'Shaughnessy relented, and I did have the district of Dubrovnik in my consular district, which meant that when the fleet came to pay its visits I was able to go down there and get rowed to the boat, and get lunch, and participate in their activities. But it was a political post basically. It was meant as a window on that part of Yugoslavia which had suffered the most during the war, where you had this peculiar mix of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, Eastern Orthodox, Serbian Orthodox, Catholics, who had fought with each other during the war; who continued to compete for power within the communist party in Bosnia-Herzegovina. And where some Yugoslavs had consciously placed some of their industry which was supposed to survive in case they were again run over from the north.

Q: It was very obvious that the Yugoslavs had put themselves into a posture where they could go back to the mountains if necessary.

ANDREWS: ...to defend their territory. Yes, I think so, and Montenegro is very much that kind of a place also. So my function as far as I could tell, was to stay in touch with important opinion leaders in the area, report what they said and thought, and what they did. There wasn't much persuasion that I had to do about anything. There were a lot of talks I had with them about Germany because they were still extraordinarily anti-German more than 15 years after the end of the war. And having served in Berlin I had a milder attitude toward Germany by then. And it didn't fit for them to be so anti-German, and at the same time say, "But we want tourism." Because Germans were the ones who were doing the touring in those days, and bringing in foreign currency into these areas. And I think it showed because the Germans sometimes met very sort of rude Yugoslavs somewhere along the way, who were more conscious of the communist party attitude toward Germany, rather than the need to make people welcome in order to attract foreign currency.

But the Sarajevo experience was unique.

Q: One last question about this. When you were there, who was calling the shots? I mean were things pretty well located in Belgrade as far as what was happening there, or because of the ethnic rivalries were the people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the communist party leaders?

ANDREWS: I think the leadership of the Bosnia communist party had gained a great deal of respect from Tito, and he let them run things the way they wanted to. There may have been plenty of consultation and discussion back and forth, but I think in the last analysis Putsar could decide how to do things in his own bailiwick. The communist party, of course, had both Croatian and Muslim, and Serbs in the leadership, and they worked reasonably well together. And then in

all the district levels you had the same kind of thing, where you didn't have just Serbs here, and just Muslims there. You had some kind of a mix. At the time the Muslims seemed to be least...they appeared on the surface less than others. They were much more reserved, much more under cover. If there were Muslims on the board of something, they seemed to be less evident and didn't meet the public very much. I think that changed over the last 30 years, but that's since my time. At the time I was dealing with them, there were a few Muslims in the party leadership, including the Prime Minister, who were outgoing, and were active. But they were, of course, not church-going. I mean they didn't go to the mosques. Like all the communists, they didn't belong to any church, and didn't go for that. But the Muslims as a whole were those looked down on, both by Croatians and Serbs.

Q: This, of course, we're in 1990 and we're in the middle of a tremendous crisis going on in the Kosovo area because of the Albanian problem.

ANDREWS: In Bosnia-Herzegovina probably the Croats felt that they didn't have as much representation as they thought they ought to. But they were keeping very low also. You just didn't hear expressions of Croatian nationalism in those days. The Muslims have since become quite important, not only in the politics of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also in the economics of it, and two or three years ago this huge scandal about money, and corruption centered around a very prominent Muslim political family in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But at the time they were brought into the politics of the Republic, but they were not part of it. They were brought into it because the communists wanted their representation, and thought it was only fair that they should be represented. But they were not naturally leaders in that area.

In Montenegro, it was just Montenegrins. There was no role played by Albanians or anybody else in Montenegro society. What you had though, I think, in both republics, beginning at the time I was there, was a sort of conflict between the older generation and the younger ones. The older generation being those who'd been part of the communist movement before the war, who had no great education, had not acquired much of an education at any time, but were still in charge and didn't understand economic things, didn't understand a lot of other things. In Montenegro you had this clash coming, I think, a little earlier. And I thought when I was there that there were a couple of younger people in the Montenegrin communist leadership who were up and coming, in fact did up and come, and they became leaders in Montenegro and have since been dumped by the new resurgent generation of forty-year olds. But at the time that they were thirty or so in the ‘50s, they were beginning to come up in Montenegro, and they succeeded. In Bosnia that was a little slower, and you had this rather complicated business of allocating seats according to race and creed, and origin even though people didn't pay attention to creed anymore. Still you paid attention to the origins, social and the racial origins. So young people had a lot of difficulty in coming up in the party, and after all, you couldn't make a career unless you were a party member, and unless you made yourself attractive to people.

JAMES G. LOWENSTEIN
Political Officer
Sarajevo, Yugoslavia (1962-1964)

Ambassador James G. Lowenstein joined the Foreign Service in 1950. He served in France before joining the U.S. Navy in 1953. He reentered the Foreign Service in 1957. His career included positions in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Yugoslavia, Luxembourg, and Washington, DC. Ambassador Lowenstein was interviewed by Ambassador Dennis Kux on June 6, 1994.

Finally the day to leave came. I was put in my jeep with no sides on it, Arctic clothing, a trailer full of C rations, a couple of extra tires, not one word of the language, and no experience in the field. I set off over the mountains from Zagreb to Sarajevo.

Q: Were you to be alone in Sarajevo?

LOWENSTEIN: I was not only alone in Sarajevo but I was the only foreigner in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The last foreigner who had been living in Bosnia-Herzegovina had been the Italian consul in Sarajevo who had left with his pregnant wife in the middle of a bombing attack. His name, I was told then, was Cavaletti, a name I have always remembered. When I got to Luxembourg as Ambassador and was calling on my colleagues, lo and behold the Italian Ambassador's name was Cavaletti. I said, "Are you related to the man who left Sarajevo during the war?" And he said, "I am the same person and the lady who met you at the door is my daughter who was born shortly after I left Sarajevo."

So I arrived in Sarajevo. The trip had taken almost 20 hours. I had two extra tires in the trailer and I used both of them. I was as close to exhaustion as I have ever been in my life--before or since. This was the worst winter in Bosnia-Herzegovina in living memory. I had been driving through blizzards and getting flat tires all the time. I didn't know where I was, I couldn't read the signs, I couldn't understand directions when I asked. Anyway I finally got to the Hotel Europa, which was to be my home for the ensuing seven months. And for these seven months, my job was to go out every morning and visit every local distribution point at the level of the Opstina which were like village councils. I visited every Opstina in the Republic, driving something like 40,000 miles in seven months in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I was out on the road every morning from 6 a.m. to about 7 at night, except for Sunday, which I took off. I did a report every week on every Opstina visited reporting on everything I observed.

Q: What sort of things were you looking for?

LOWENSTEIN: I was looking at the distribution system to make sure that all the stuff wasn't being simply driven up to Party headquarters and dumped off in a back room some place for their use. I saw that there were distribution points, that the citizens were lining up to get the food, that there was some method for distributing it, and it was going from the rail head to these distribution points. At least, that was ostensibly the purpose. In fact, there was another purpose of the mission which became rapidly evident to me although it was never stated explicitly. We were driving around in jeeps that had the American flag and ECA symbol on the side, and we were accustoming the people to seeing Americans all over the country. We were pretending to observe much more than in fact we were capable of observing. But the observing we did do was a deterrent to abuses. And what we were doing, it later became clear to me, was also setting the

stage for further assistance programs. In fact, military assistance started soon thereafter in 1955. By getting everybody used to the fact that Americans were running all over in jeeps marked with the American flag, the next step was a lot easier for both the government to swallow and the people to accept. It was sort of a salami tactic in reverse. It was the first Western involvement in Yugoslavia that involved a visible presence.

Q: Were the Yugoslav people sensitive about Westerners being there or just the Yugoslav government?

LOWENSTEIN: The people were not, the government was. The head of the Party in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a charming character named Rudi Kolak who, I was told, had been Tito's radio operator during the war. After I had been there about three weeks, he called me into his office. I should say I was alone--that is, I was the only American--but I was given an interpreter and a mechanic. The interpreter was a graduate student from Belgrade who hated being in Sarajevo and whose English wasn't really very good. At any rate, he informed me that Kolak was furious that anyone as young and inexperienced as I was had been assigned to Bosnia-Herzegovina. He felt insulted, and thought he wasn't being taken seriously. So I arrived at Kolak's office (and he did the same thing to me three times in the course of seven months). He began by saying, "Are you enjoying it here in Sarajevo?" I said, "Not at all. You don't permit me to talk to anybody [which he didn't]. There is no fraternization. There is nothing to do, and I don't enjoy it at all." At which point he said, "Well, maybe we should introduce you to some pretty girls." I said I thought that was a very good idea. At which point he would shake his finger and say, "No, no, that is not a good idea, it would distract you from your serious work."

Now the funny thing about it is that Rudi Kolak later fell into disgrace as the result of a sex scandal which was known as the Palais Rose of Sarajevo which involved women, orgies, etc. So, in fact, he was predicting his own demise.

But Sarajevo was rather rough.

Q: When you said you were not allowed to fraternize did that mean you couldn't talk to people?

LOWENSTEIN: The only person I attempted to establish a relationship with was the son of the hotel manager who was 19. He liked American jazz and I had a shortwave radio. I had a living room and bedroom in the hotel. A couple of times he would come in and listen to jazz with me on the shortwave radio. About the third time he came in, he said, "This is the last time. I have been told I can't talk to you again." In fact, nobody talked to me. Well, there were two exceptions. There were two local government liaison officers who would take me out every couple of weeks to a restaurant, but one spoke no English, and the other a little and I didn't speak Serbo-Croatian at that point. Conversation was all through my jolly interpreter who by that time was getting on my nerves. So I read a lot of books, although I was so tired at night that most of the time I slept.

Q: How often did you get down to the Embassy?

LOWENSTEIN: Every month we were all called into the Embassy for two days. I would either drive up or go by train. Twice I was called back to Paris, each time for two days. But the only way to get to Paris was by train, and the train took two days each way.

Incidentally, the Ambassador at that time was George Allen. He made it a point of going out and visiting each one of the food observers. I should mention that I had been promoted to the exalted rank of FSS-9 and was making a bloody fortune. I had gone from $3200 to $5300! George Allen came down to Sarajevo and spent two days with me. He came with his wife and stayed at the hotel. Whenever I was in Belgrade he invited me over for dinner and just couldn't have been more interested, accessible, friendly, open, very, very impressive. He came up in a later stage in my life which I will get into when we talk about the Navy.

After six or seven months of this, I finally got word from the Navy that...

Q: What were your relations with the head of the operation?

LOWENSTEIN: Richard Allen? Very good. The whole operation worked well. The observers did an excellent job on the whole. A few of them weren't overly serious and devoted, and they did have a better time than the rest of us. Richard Allen, the former Red Cross executive, not only had a close working relationship with Ambassador Allen, to whom he was not related, but he was also a wonderful man to work with. So the whole thing was extremely interesting. The work involved a lot of responsibility for someone 22 years old and while I hated it, I loved it at the same time.

Q: Did your reporting extend beyond the distribution system?

LOWENSTEIN: Yes, it did.

Q: Would you like to elaborate?

LOWENSTEIN: Well, we were encouraged to put in anything. Since I had a lot of time in the evenings, I did a lot of reporting about the conditions of the countryside, whatever political observations I could make without being able to talk to people, conversations that I would overhear and ask my interpreter to translate, what the liaison officers were saying, what Rudi Kolak was like, etc. I don't know if anybody ever read these things, I don't know what happened to them, but I enjoyed writing them.

Q: Now Sarajevo is right and center 42 years later. Would you ever have thought it?

LOWENSTEIN: No. I don't think that anybody who served in Yugoslavia and knew it well, at least nobody I ever met, predicted what has actually happened. That there were all of these tensions, sure. That there might eventually be some separation of the country, sure. That there were going to be perhaps violent local outbreaks, gang warfare, sure. But the kind of thing that has happened, I don't know a single person, Yugoslav or American or foreign, who predicted it. Sarajevo's standard of living in those days was extremely low, and the population spent their energy surviving. People were very poor. There wasn't very much food or heat. The winter was

extremely severe. The only time in my life that I saw wolves was coming back from one of these jeep jaunts after dark and I saw them in the distance in my headlights. This terrified my Belgrade interpreter who hadn't spent much time in the country.

Finally I was told that my officer candidate class would start in early January, 1952. I was asked whether in the interim I would like to stay in Paris and be assigned to something called the Temporary Council Committee of NATO which, of course, delighted me. This Committee was known colloquially as "The Three Wise Men." The three wise men were Harriman, for the United States, Monnet for France and Lord Plowden for Britain.

Q: Who was Plowden?

LOWENSTEIN: Lord Plowden had been...I can't remember what he had been before then. He was later the author of the Plowden Report on organizing the British Foreign Service. I think he had been Permanent Under Secretary of the Foreign Office, or he might have been Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Anyway, he was one of the great wise men in Britain in the field of foreign relations and at the same level as Harriman and Monnet.

The task of these three men was to figure out how to get NATO to divide its resources. What came out of this was first of all what are called the Lisbon goals, which were goals set for the various countries at the Lisbon meeting in December, 1951 or January, 1952, I can't remember exactly when. And so something called the Annual Review was born. It existed as long as I have known anything about NATO affairs. All of this was hammered out at what is now the OECD headquarters at the Chateau de la Muette, which was then headquarters for the OECD. The U.S. delegation to this committee was very high powered. I still have the list at home. Henry Tasca, Lincoln Gordon, Charles Bonasteel, Harriman, Milton Katz and two young aides. One was Fred Chapin (later Ambassador to several countries) and I was the other. It was really a sort of glorified messenger boy operation--collating papers, running back and forth to the Chateau with stuff for Harriman, proof reading, the executive secretary of a delegation kind of job. But you were hanging around with the great men, and Fred and I became very close friends. In the evenings we would go about together with our group. There was a huge group of young Americans around ECA headquarters in Paris in those days. A lot of them were messengers, some of them were junior executives, and some of them worked in the ECA Mission to France. Among those who worked in the mission to France was Arthur Hartman, which is how I first met him. Another was Paul Douglas, the son of the Senator from Illinois. I still see some of this group. Some went into government after that but many didn't stay very long. The after hours activities were a lot of fun. Fred and I had something to do almost every evening, although we usually didn't finish work until 8:30 or 9:00.

Q: What were your impressions of the operation and the three wise men?

LOWENSTEIN: My impression, not only of this particular operation but also of the ECA mission to France and OSR (the European headquarters of the Marshall Plan) was that this was the most competent group of people I had ever seen. The trouble is that this remains true. It is still the most competent group of people I have ever seen. I thought the US government was going to be like this throughout. Sad to say, it hasn't been quite that way. It was a tremendous

agglomeration of talent. All of these people seemed to be devoted to getting done what they had to do. I didn't see any bureaucratic backbiting. That is what struck me at the time.

Q: How do you account for that?

LOWENSTEIN: I don't know. Maybe I was too far away from it being so junior. But the atmosphere was totally different from any other organization that I have ever seen. Everyone was highly motivated. It just seemed to me that nobody was paying any attention to regulations and directives, or their next jobs. They were conducting themselves as though the "bureaucracy" didn't exist. I remember when I was finally leaving to come back and go into the Navy, it was just before Christmas, and someone on Harriman's immediate staff said, "Look, since you are going back anyway, would you mind taking this package of documents?" I said, "Sure, what is it?" He said, "Well, it is the US part of the NATO Annual Review." It was highly classified, but nobody paid any attention to it. It was stuck in an envelope and given to me to be turned in when I arrived in Washington, which I did. So it was that kind of operation.

I left Paris a couple of days before Christmas, went to Washington to check out, and then spent Christmas at home.

Q: Did you have much to do with Harriman directly?

LOWENSTEIN: No, very little. He would bark at me occasionally, "Where is that envelope I told you to get?"

Q: How big was the delegation?

LOWENSTEIN: Well, the delegation must have had ten people on it, plus Fred and me. The other representatives had delegations of the same size. We never saw them because we were staffed out of the OSR building.

So, in early January, I reported to officer candidate training at Newport. I went to OCS in January and was commissioned in May as an ensign. I go into the Navy business because it also relates to the Foreign Service. A month before commissioning an officer arrived from Washington to give us our assignments. I had made only one request which was that I wanted to be on a large ship, not a small one, because at that point I was still getting slightly seasick on small craft and thought if I had a choice I would rather be on a large ship. To my astonishment I actually got what I wanted, one of the three largest aircraft carriers, the Coral Sea. The three largest were the Roosevelt, the Coral Sea, and I can't think what the name of the third one was.

I had been aboard the Coral Sea three or four days when the Executive Officer of the ship called me in. He was a Commander and I was the junior ensign on the ship of 3500 officers and men. He said, "I have an assignment for you. Nobody knows this, but we are going to be the first naval vessel to call at a Yugoslav port. Not only that, we are going to have Tito aboard. We are going to take him out for a day. I want you to work with the Admiral's aide and help him organize this thing." I should have said that the Coral Sea was in the Sixth Fleet; the Coral Sea and the Roosevelt rotated.

So in due course we went into Split and the officers and men were all on parade on the flight deck. In front of the gangway were the Admiral, his chief of staff who was a Captain, the Captain of the ship, the Executive Officer, the Admiral's Aide, etc. down to me. There were about ten people standing by the gangway. Tito came aboard followed by Ambassador Allen. The Admiral led Tito on a review of the officers and men standing at attention. As they passed me, with my eyes fixed straight ahead, Ambassador Allen somehow spotted me and said, "Jim, what the hell are you doing there?" I said, "Well, let me explain." He said, "Well, come on. Why don't you come along with us?" He said to the Admirals and Captains, etc., "Why this young man was this and that and the other thing and we worked together, etc." And then he introduced me to Tito. He said something like, this is the young man who helped save your country kind of thing, Tito nodded and said, "Yes, I know, I know, I know." So I had a lovely day. Tito was seated on the flight deck. He went through the chow line and the enlisted men's mess hall. He ate hot dogs. I was with him throughout. I just had a splendid time. Finally they left and I went back to my cabin. The Admiral's aide came down and said, "You know who those men were?" I said yes, and repeated their names and ranks. He said, "How many times do you think you saluted in the course of the day?" I didn't really know the saluting protocol. So to make a long story short I was confined to my cabin for a week for not behaving properly.

The other kind of Foreign Service experience that I had while on the ship was that among other things I edited the ship's newspaper. The ship's newspaper was written by stealing out of the airwaves all the wire service reports. They were pasted together during the night. The paper had a circulation of 4500 so it was rather a large newspaper actually. The day we were going into Barcelona on an official fleet visit, I had a headline in the newspaper that said, "Signing of Spanish Base Negotiations Postponed" or something like that. They were then being conducted by Admiral King. I should say that by this time I was also used by the Admiral as a French interpreter and sometimes taken as sort of an assistant PAO or PIO when he went ashore. This happened to be one of those times, I was along with his party. There was a formal dinner when we called in Barcelona. The Ambassador was there with members of his staff, etc. The Admiral, whose name was Grover Budd Hartley Hall, got up at the dinner and said that he was delighted to be there on the day that the Spanish bases agreement had been signed. At that point all the reporters rushed off. After the dinner was over, the Embassy PAO asked the Admiral what had made him think the Spanish bases agreement had been signed. The Admiral said, "Because it was in the ship's newspaper this morning and I read it. The editor is this young Ensign right over there." The Admiral's aide then grabbed me and said, "Let's go back to the ship and get this bloody newspaper of yours." So we did. Of course, that is not what the newspaper said at all. Then I went back to shore and helped telephone all over the place--the Embassy, the wire services, etc.

Q: But, you already had a sense for Yugoslavia.

LOWENSTEIN: Yes, I knew what I was getting back into. I was very excited about working for Kennan. So, the only thing that I was concerned about was I didn't want to go through all of this and be assigned to Zagreb or get out of political reporting and be assigned to something else. I did lobby on that and I was assigned to the political section. I don't think it was a tough lobbying job because the political section was enormous.

I was assigned to do internal reporting in the political section, Larry was assigned to the economic section, David Anderson was in the political section too. Harry Dunlop was in the political section. So we all finished language training and went to Belgrade.

There I had the horrible experience of living in a compound, the first and only time in my life. One of the most miserable decisions the US Government ever made was to build compounds in places where it is difficult enough to have a relationship with the inhabitants of the country. This is guaranteed to make it almost impossible, especially in a place like Belgrade. I must say I hated every minute of it and vowed I would never go to a place again where there was any compound living.

I know the Foreign Service doesn't like to make distinctions between substantive and non-substantive people at embassies on the grounds that they are all part of the same family, but they are not part of the same family, or rather they are part of the same family but with different functions. It is absolutely ridiculous to put substantive reporting officers in compound situations. Anyway, I got out of there after a year, but it was a terrible year.

Q: Talk about how Kennan ran the embassy.

LOWENSTEIN: Kennan ran the embassy in a very distant way. That's not his thing, he is a thinker, obviously. I saw very little of him. Far less of him than any other ambassador I worked for.

Q: Was the embassy building a big one?

LOWENSTEIN: No, and he had to walk past my office every day to get to his office. So he walked past it in the morning, on the way to lunch, back in the afternoon, out in the evening. He had to walk past it at least four times a day and on most days far more often than that. He never really dropped in. It was true that I was a second secretary in the political section and he had the political counselor to deal with and the economic counselor and a couple of first secretaries, but...

Q: How large was the political section?

LOWENSTEIN: The political section had a political counselor, Dick Johnson, David Anderson, myself and somebody else. It seems to me there were five officers.

Q: Did the ambassador have a weekly staff meeting?

LOWENSTEIN: Yes, he had a weekly staff meeting, but the political counselor attended it.

Q: You didn't attend it?

LOWENSTEIN: No.

Q: Oh. He didn't have a daily staff meeting?

LOWENSTEIN: No. There was a political section staff meeting a couple of times a week and occasionally he would attend that. But by and large one didn't have much connection with him.

Q: What was he interested in?

LOWENSTEIN: Well there was MFN, the perennial question with the Yugoslavs as to whether they were going to have MFN privileges restored or taken away.

Q: MFN stands for Most Favored Nation status dealing with tariffs.

LOWENSTEIN: It was right after the non-aligned summit in which Tito had come out and criticized the United States for testing nuclear weapons, but had ignored a massive Soviet test of nuclear weapons, thus breaking faith with Kennan. It was a rather rocky period in Yugoslav-American relations. There was a lot of police surveillance and all Americans were on their guard all the time against being overheard, compromised, etc. There was sort of a security neurosis.

There were a couple of things that stick in my mind which didn't really relate to Belgrade. One was...as I recall we were testing the Hungarians to see when they would give diplomatic visas to visit. Two embassy officers every week would apply for visas in pairs. I was paired with Gerry Livingston, who was in the economic section and whom I had known before the Foreign Service. Suddenly these visas came through for us and we were the first ones to go. Our orders were to drive to Budapest and spend the weekend and visit what was then a legation in Budapest, to see if anyone tried to tamper with our trunk because Cardinal Mindszenty was still living in the legation. And to otherwise observe how much we were followed, which wasn't very difficult because we were followed from the minute we crossed the border until we crossed back into Yugoslavia.

Another part of it was that the embassy was divided into field reporting teams. One officer from the economic section and one from the political section. We were supposed to go out two or three times a year. I was paired with Larry Eagleburger. So two or three times a year, Larry and I would go out in a jeep and tour around the country, sometimes with Tom Niles in the back seat, who was a junior officer trainee. I did most of the driving because I don't drink and Larry would accept all offers of slivovitz that began at 8:00 in the morning, so by one o'clock in the afternoon the driving naturally fell to me. I had Eagleburger or Eagleburger and Niles conked out on the back seat. Anyway, those trips were a lot of fun.

Q: Did you get back to Sarajevo?

LOWENSTEIN: I got back to Sarajevo quite often.

Q: Was that part of your reporting beat?

LOWENSTEIN: No, it really wasn't, but I got back during trips down and back to the Dalmatian coast. In fact, jumping ahead, after I got out of the Foreign Service, when I started consulting

with companies with interests in Yugoslavia, I was in Sarajevo quite often, so I kept up with Sarajevo.

The reporting in the embassy was sort of the usual grind. What was going on in the Party, what was going on in parliament, the new constitution, what it meant, relations with other countries. There was a daily press summary that had to be translated and edited, which the junior officers in the political section, or what passed for junior officers, we were all rather elderly junior officers, had to take turns doing.

Q: Did you predict Yugoslavia would fall apart?

LOWENSTEIN: No, at the time it was difficult to see that they would fall apart, except for maybe Slovenia. My theory at the time was that if you looked at the intermarriage between Croats Bosnians, Slovenes and Serbs, it was so high that within a generation or two there wouldn't be any ethnic divisions. Intermarriage would obliterate these ethnic distinctions. The second element was the very intelligent policy of Tito which was to draft everyone, but to make sure that they served outside their own republics in other republics. I thought these two things would work against continuing these ethnic divisions, but I was totally wrong, obviously. However, there is a large group of Yugoslavs who don't know who they are because they have Croat mothers and Serb fathers and Macedonian wives. The one group that was clearly going to be the object of everyone's prejudice was the Albanians. They were really looked on as *untermenschen* and discriminated against in every possible way or ridiculed.

Q: Why was that?

LOWENSTEIN: First of all they were of Albanian and not Serbo-Croatian origin. Secondly, they were Muslim. Third, they came from a very underdeveloped part of the country. Fourth, they had stuck together as a group and hadn't intermarried. Fifth, in Kosovo they were far less educated, had fewer opportunities and so they were economically deprived.

Q: So, it sounds like Yugoslavia was not much fun.

LOWENSTEIN: It was interesting but it wasn't much fun.

CHARLES STUART KENNEDY
Consular Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1962-1967)

Charles Stuart Kennedy was born in Illinois in 1928. His Foreign Service career included positions in Germany, Saudi Arabia, Yugoslavia, Vietnam, Greece, Korea, Italy, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Victor Wolf, Jr. on July 24, 1986.

Q: *You had an assignment in Washington in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and you also had Serbo-Croatian language training. But then I think the next big assignment you had that touches on this issue was as consul in Belgrade from 1962 to 1967. One of the things that would strike me as being significant here was the juxtaposition of our having essentially friendly relations with a Communist state, on the one hand, and the very stringent anti-Communist position laid down in the McCarran-Walters Act when it comes to visa issuances. Was that a major preoccupation for you?*

KENNEDY: Yes, it was, because we wanted to encourage nonimmigrant travel of the elite, the people we thought would return to Yugoslavia after visiting the United States. It was the only Communist country at that time with whom we had really close relations, but we had this law that just said if you were a member of the Communist Party or something, you had to get a waiver. The Immigration Service was really very good with this, because we could call the Immigration Service. They had posts in Vienna and in Frankfurt. And I could get a waiver over the phone, if necessary. But emigration created some problems, because many of the people who came to us would have been affiliated one way or the other, usually not Communist Party members, but they'd belong to the Workers Alliance or the Communist League, this type of thing. We would have to find out whether or not they were significant members or just rank and file members.

George Kennan felt his importance, because at that point he was a well-known historian and political thinker, as well as being somebody who had left the Foreign Service, and had been personally picked by President Kennedy for the position. So I had trouble, because every time I had a visa case that caused me problems, he was quite willing to get on the phone and call up Robert Kennedy, who was Attorney General at the time, to straighten it out, and I didn't think this was the right way to do this. You usually got around it by sort of going at a lower level.

Our problem there in Yugoslavia was really both the Communist side and dealing with getting waivers, but also initially nonimmigrant visas for so-called visitors who actually planned to go to the United States. We had a great deal of trouble sorting out the "good visitors" from the "bad visitors."

Q: *I know that in other Eastern European countries, there are several categories of what are called "bad visitors." One category are those who use the non-immigrant visa to come to the United States and stay permanently; the other are those who use the non-immigrant visa to go to the United States, work for a number of years, save their American dollar earnings as much as they can, and then when they return to their country, they are in a very good financial situation to live well. I know, for example, that this is a pattern or was, at any rate, in the late '70s, as far as Poland was concerned. Did you encounter that sort of thing in Yugoslavia?*

KENNEDY: Not as much as in some other countries, but we had our problems. Western Macedonia was a particular thorn in the consular side. There was an extensive Macedonia community in some of the factory towns of our Midwest, especially in Gary, Indiana. We would sometimes get a busload of men and women from the little town of Ljubojno, near Bitola, asking for visitors' visas. Our experience was that most were going to stay as that was the pattern. It was no fun to sit and interview person after person, often young peasant women who were going to

Gary or the like to be presented at the local Macedonia Hall for the bachelors of the community to look over and select them for their brides, and house servants (the wedding came first and then the house work came immediately thereafter). Sometimes we would break down and take a chance hoping that some of our visitors might return. I remember issuing one visa and noting on the approval card that the young lady I was issuing the visa to was so lacking in physical attributes of beauty that I was sure she would not be asked to stay. She was married within a month of entry. I sometimes think that the good citizens of the Gary should put up a monument to the consular officers whose mistaken judgments made the population of their city grow.

In 1967 Montreal had a world's fair, called Expo '67. Air Yugoslavia arranged for special charter flights to go to Canada for those who wanted to see the fair. The flights stopped off in the United States so we were in the transit visa business. We were flooded with applicants who wanted to see the fair. Now there were special air fares which was an inducement, but we were very suspicious when we had busloads of people coming up for visas who had never even been to Belgrade before, but suddenly had a yen to see a fair in Canada. We had to turn down many of these visas, much to the annoyance of the airline people.

We had many people who were getting Social Security benefits, who had been working in the United States, some through the war years, all had returned and were living rather well on what we would normally consider to be a modest pension, but in Yugoslavia at the time, it was significant. They had left their families behind. But the ones we were getting at that point were people who were just trying to get out. Yugoslavia was depressed and it was a little hard to get money back, and so the ones that were going were trying, as far as we knew, to settle permanently, but it was a little hard to judge at that point.

Q: *What else do you think was significant, as far as movement of peoples is concerned, with regard to the five years you were in Yugoslavia? Can you give us any other thoughts?*

KENNEDY: We did deal with the problem of escapees. Yugoslavia was sort of a semi-closed window for the rest of Eastern Europe. Many Eastern Europeans could get into Yugoslavia for vacations, for business trips, but they couldn't get into the West, because they would appear to be defecting, leaving. We spent a good bit of our time interviewing people from East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, not really from the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, who would see the American flag and felt they were there in Yugoslavia, feeling somewhat anonymous, felt they could come and talk with them about getting out, seeking refuge. We couldn't give refuge to them because they were not in imminent danger.

Q: *You're referring to the asylum process, the distinction between what one could call legation asylum and territorial asylum.*

KENNEDY: Yes.

Q: *You couldn't give legation asylum.*

KENNEDY: We couldn't give legation asylum. Then they would ask us, "How do I get to Italy or Greece?" which were the two main places to go. We would have to say, "We can't advise you

to do this," because we had a concern about our relations with the Yugoslavs. But we'd say, "If I were doing this, I certainly wouldn't try this border crossing point. Maybe this one. We've heard people go through here." So we'd give them a certain amount of direction. The Yugoslav attitude was sort of "iffy," because they didn't want to be the prison guards for these people, but at the same time, they didn't want to lose their credibility with the rest of the Communist world. So sometimes they would pick them up at the border; other times they'd just shoo them back; other times they'd turn a blind eye and let them go across.

Q: *Do you have any sense as to the percentages who fell in each category?*

KENNEDY: I'd hate to judge. There was a significant number of people, particularly during the summer months, who came to us to ask for assistance, including people from other Communist countries, on getting out. We would talk to them and listen to them, try to give them as good advice as we could without jeopardizing our position with the Yugoslavs.

Before finishing with Yugoslavia I should mention the problems of fraud. They were not significant as compared to many other countries, but we had our problems. I had received a few unsubstantiated complaints about our chief visa clerk, Madam Zhukov. She was a very distinguished elderly lady who was in charge of quota control, which called forth immigrant visa applicants when their registration date was reached. It was hard for me to believe that she was engaged in some sort of shady deal, and the allegations were vague. I checked out whatever I could, but they smacked of sour grapes, of people who did not get visas for perfectly legitimate reasons. Then one day I was called early in the morning and told that Madam Zhukov had died in her sleep. After going to her apartment to pay my respects, she was lying on her bed while all of us gathered around and mumbled nice things about her, I returned to my office. There I had to immediately settle the line of succession. The other Yugoslav ladies who had worked under Madam Zhukov were all atwitter over who would take her place, with all sort of rumors going around about what I was planning to do. At that point I was not planning anything but to get through the day. But the concern was such that I had to settle the matter right away. During my conversations with the potential successors I learned that Madam Zhukov had indeed been taking advantage of the system. She would take a perfectly straightforward case shortly before we were due to set up an appointment for an interview and to issue the immigrant visa, call up the person and make a big show of going through the file, tisk-tisking and making discouraging sounds as she read the file. This would make the applicant nervous and ask what the problem was? Madam Zhukov would say that there were difficulties and she was not sure if a visa could be issued. The applicant would ask what should be done and Madam Zhukov would suggest that they see a lawyer, and give a name. The applicants usually rose to the bait and did that, with the lawyer and Madam Zhukov splitting the fee. Since the visa was almost always issued there were few complaints, and the ones I received were not specific enough. The ladies of the visa unit saw this but were afraid of the Grande Dame and said nothing until she was dead, and told all within a few hours.

Another learning experience for me was on how to treat instructions from the Department. I discovered the hard way that you really have to look at everything from the local point of view and modify, if necessary. In 1966 or 1967 there was a major reform of the visa law which eliminated, among other things, the possibility of anyone signing up for a visa with little hope of

ever being called. We had people who were registered as non-preference applicants who had no close relatives in the U.S. or line of work that would qualify them under the law, but they could put their names down on the list prior to the law reform. We had almost 100,000 on our waiting list and just from a office point of view it was a major burden since we were always having to answer letters and explaining that the waiting list was not moving, etc. The new law allowed us to cancel these applications after we explained that they had to be qualified, by job or close relative, which meant either parents, spouse, child or brothers or sisters in the United States.

The Department sent us a form letter that we were to translate into Serbian and send out to everyone. We expected that we would be able to cancel thousands and thousands of registrations after the applicants realized they did not qualify and did not reply to our letter asking if they did indeed have relatives or work that made them eligible. Unfortunately I had the form letter transcribed literally. Now in Serbian (and Croatian) there is a very complicated relationship system with special names for every relationship, including those of cousins on both sides of the family. Included in these names were the use of "brother from the aunt" or "sister from the uncle" denoting cousins, sometimes quite far removed. In normal talk the Serbs would refer to their cousins as "brothers or sisters" so when our letter went out all the applicants noted that they did indeed have "brothers" or "sisters" in the United States. Everyone in Yugoslavia has some sort of cousin in the U.S.! It took another mailing and much correspondence to untangle this mess. I should have said to my staff, "Look this over and see if there are any problems" but I just said "Translate it."

Q: You went to Belgrade, and you spent nearly five years there. This again, is normal after some shorter assignments in the beginning of a career. You begin to hit your long stride. You were very much in the Balkans. You were there at a complicated time, even though the stability that Tito provided was well known. In the countries around you, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, there were upheavals. You lived in the shadow of Soviet influence. Tell me about that. Tell me particularly about your sense of the tremendously diverse nature of the ethnic entities that made up what was then called Yugoslavia. The hatreds, did you feel those? Were they totally beneath the surface? Were you astonished, for instance, to see the violence that has emerged over the past several years, and now that the Yugoslav republic no longer exists and the Cold War is over.

KENNEDY: It's sort of yes, and no. I won't say that the hatreds and what has developed were that apparent. Obviously, they didn't like each other, and my feeling is that the dissolution of Yugoslavia doesn't surprise me, but the violence, the venom of this in a way surprised me because it didn't have to happen. I think it's a case of bad political leadership.

Q: On whose part?

KENNEDY: You had an unholy alliance of the head of the Serbian side, Milosevic, and on the Croatian side, Tudjman. Tudjman probably felt more anti-Serb than Milosevic felt anti-Croat. I think Milosevic was more an opportunist. He played the nationalist card without maybe feeling it as much in his bones as others, but I don't know the man. When you were in Yugoslavia you could tell that Serbs and Croats didn't get along well together. The Macedonians and Montenegrins were looked down upon. The Bosnians didn't seem to play much of a role. As a

matter of fact, in a way I don't think we thought of Bosnia as really being a separate entity. We just assumed that Bosnians would fall into either the Croatian, or Serbian camps. There were those Muslims who were rather inoffensive people who didn't fit into the Albanian minority which were in Macedonia and Kosovo area, but weren't particularly prominent. I don't think we thought about them very much. But every once in a while you'd run across something. I remember one of my local employees, a Serbian, a very nice lady, and we got a letter which was in Croatian and they used different words for the months. I asked, "What are the names of the months in Croatian?" And she looked at me indignantly and said, "I didn't learn that sort of thing." It struck me as being a little bit silly.

We felt that Tito was holding things together. In the first place, there was always the Soviet threat, and this is what really held things together. Nobody in their right mind wanted to see Yugoslavia split up, including the Yugoslavs because if they split up, the Soviets might come in. And the Soviets were the devil incarnate. I think that was the ambience in which we were working.

Q: How outspoken was criticism of the Soviet Union and Soviet leaders on the part of Yugoslavs to the extent you were able to pick it up while you were in Belgrade? Were you conscience that Yugoslavia was indeed a horse of another color in the stable of Eastern European countries?

KENNEDY: Oh, absolutely. I don't think there was any doubt in any Yugoslavs' mind that the enemy lay to the east, not to the west. Now, what they did with this is another matter. There were people who were very much in bed with the Communist Party. That's where their livelihood came from, but it was their own Communist Party. In a way the Soviet Union didn't play a real role there, outside of the fact that it was the Soviet Union in a sense gave the pressure to make the whole thing hold together.

Q: What was your sense of the warmth of the relationship between the United States and Yugoslavia?

KENNEDY: Pretty good. Most Yugoslavs knew. So many of them had relatives in the United States. We had a lot of pensioners there. Many of them had helped American pilots escape during the war. When the times were really difficult, when Stalin was really putting on the pressure in the late '40s, the United States came out with some help. I remember our ambassador, Burke Elbrick, mentioning that Tito telling him privately, "You know, one of the most stabilizing influences in this whole area is the American Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean."

Q: Here we are in 1996, and for the past several years, quite a few years in fact, there has been terrible ethnic violence in the former Yugoslav republic. As you look at the scenes of this violence on television, you recognize that so much of it is carried out by quite young people. Young men, perhaps even their late teens, certainly a great many of them in their twenties, these are driven people. Does that surprise you? Does that suggest that in the seemingly quiet and more unified times for Yugoslavia in the privacy of various kitchens, the old flames of hatred were being fanned in the very young and all they needed was a chance to erupt?

KENNEDY: Well, having lived also for four years in Greece, I saw how the Greeks learned from their mothers' milk how awful the Turks were. The Balkans were a nursery ground of ancient hatreds. Was it 1359, or whatever it was, when the Ottomans beat the Serbs in the battle of Kosovo? That's like yesterday. Yes. I got from the Serbs something you don't hear much now, but the town of Galena was a place in World War II where the Croatians, led by the Franciscan fathers! burned Orthodox churches full of Serbs. And the Bosnian Muslims did unspeakable things to Serbs too. Tito was sitting on this. It's very hard, Brandon, to look at this, and look at these people that you know and like and not help feeling that these people are too smart to do this. How can they be so stupid as to get into this? These are really nice people. I have an awful feeling that this is the way a lot of Jews felt about the Germans when they were in Germany before the Holocaust and did not try to get out. You just get the right combination of nasty leadership. It bothers me because I think this can happen elsewhere. I think in the United States you could get something going against the blacks, or maybe against the Mexicans, or something like that. You can stoke up these things. You need good leadership that won't let this thing get out of hand. And the problem is that the political process sometimes brings people who are essentially opportunists.

Q: Are you saying that Tito should have done more to obviously groom a successor? So that when he finally died there would be someone with a decent chance...

KENNEDY: Yes. I think that Tito did make a terrible mistake in order to preserve his continuity and not being challenged in his later stages. He did not allow for the development of a succession the way Franco in Spain did. Somebody who might have been more moderate than he was, but who could have nurtured the Yugoslav body politic into allowing for a more forgiving group of politicians to come up to lead. That was a terrible disservice on his part.

Q: Was this something that an American ambassador might have been able to talk to him about very privately?

KENNEDY: No, I don't think so. Tito kept his own council. I think as he got older he got more paranoia. It was not of the Stalin type. I wasn't there at that time. When I was there Tito was still at the height of his powers. But from what I gather he just wouldn't allow much reform. If he didn't initiate it, it wasn't going to be done.

Q: Under which ambassadors did you serve in Belgrade?

KENNEDY: I started under George Kennan, and then had Burke Elbrick. One is always learning in the Foreign Service, and I have to say that I had a great deal of respect for George Kennan.

Q: Tell me about him as an ambassador.

KENNEDY: Well, looking at him from my perspective, I was the chief of his consular section. We would see each other almost every day. I would go to his staff meetings, and every time he would go around his country team asking the chiefs by their first names, about things and then when he go to me he would say, "What's new in the consular section?" He never really learned my name. He would enter the embassy every day and the consular section was only two steps

down from the entryway, but he never poked his head in there. After a lot of negotiating, I got him to come to the consular section once in the year we served together, for a Christmas party. He was a delightful person, but he didn't strike me as a very well rounded ambassador.

Q: In what sense?

KENNEDY: Well, after all, consular problems were major components of his mission. We had cases with Americans in trouble. I wasn't asking for him to do something all the time, but he just didn't pay any attention to it at all. The other thing was, from time to time I'd have a visa problem, particularly dealing with the Communists. We had people we wanted to go to the United States, and everybody was somewhat tainted with communism who was anybody in Yugoslavia. We were sort of cutting through and trying to find ways to get people in without turning it into a big case. He would hear about one of these things, and say, "I'll call Bobby Kennedy." Bobby Kennedy being the Attorney General at the time. Well, I would have to sort of dissuade him from calling Bobby Kennedy, because Bobby Kennedy probably wouldn't have gotten anything done and you just wasted ammunition.

And the other thing that bothered me. I didn't deal with it at the time, but I was getting this from people in the political and economic sections. There was, I think, a Kennedy round of negotiations on tariffs, or something. I'm not sure of the exact details of this. But Kennedy was having a hard time getting this through, and one of the things that happened was, to make sure that the extreme rights of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party were on board so we withdrew most favored nation status from Yugoslavia. I was told by those who were following it, "Don't worry. The President has got to make an announcement before the process of withdrawing starts, then you've got to give it a year. It's just not going to happen. But this is just a little raw meat for these Neanderthals in the right wing of our political process to make them feel happy for them Tito was that tin horned dictator, he was a commie, and that sort of thing. George Kennan, from what I could see, and from what I was getting from others, never saw this. He said, "How can they do this to me?" He would call the President, and he really seemed to be advocating that the President should get on a train, and travel a la Wilson for the League of Nations around the United States to do battle on this issue. And as pragmatist, myself, and my feeling was shared by many, that Kennan didn't really understand the American system very well. He thought things should be much more perfect. That always diminished Kennan in my view, and the fact that he got himself declared *persona non grata* from Moscow didn't have to happen. So professionally I never was one of his great admirers, but I am a great admirer of him as an intellectual, with reservations about some of his stands.

Q: When you say he didn't understand the American system, let me probe you a little bit. Are you talking about the relationship between the executive and the congress? Are you talking about the kind of politics that you described a few minutes ago, give it some time, some of this is posturing, etc. What aspects of the American system do you think that George Kennan wasn't getting right?

KENNEDY: I think that he felt that the system should be perfect, and that if there was something in foreign policy that made good sense, and the most-favored nations status for Yugoslavia made absolute sense, there was no reason to have any debate or conflict over the issue. It was a blip in our relations, and this is where a good ambassador, I think, would have been able to explain it,

"Tito, don't worry. This is local politics. We'll take care of it." He didn't feel comfortable with the American political system. He's an elitist. This is the way it should be, the United States is a leader, and we shouldn't have to go through this nonsense. This is fine, but we do go through this nonsense. And a good American ambassador has to understand the system, and know how to play it and explain it to his hosts. Otherwise he is not effective.

To give you a little example that comes up much later, but is an example of his approach, when I started this oral history program, I thought, "Gee, it would be a good idea to get a letter saying how wonderful this program would be from George Kennan." It would be something I could flash around. So I sent him a letter saying "I was chief of your consular section for a year, and this is what I'm doing, and I plan to interview people. Could you comment on the value of the project?" It took a long time and I finally got a very short letter from him which in essence said, well, the project would only be good if you interviewed just a few of the right people -- it was phrased differently, but that's what he meant. To me that's George Kennan. I don't want to knock him, I'm just talking about my reflections on this man. As I say I'm not a great admirer.

Q: Did you have the feeling that the embassy in terms of its objectives was doing as much as the U.S. could usefully, and reasonably, expect to accomplish in the relationship with Yugoslavia at that time?

KENNEDY: I do. I think we were trying to keep this relationship front and center and understandable in the United States. The Yugoslavs knew what they wanted. They liked the United States, we didn't have to sell the United States. Our real problem was back in Washington to let people understand that this was an important relationship. It was helping in its own way of undermining what Ronald Reagan would later term, "the evil empire of the Soviet Union", by allowing this maverick to exist in a communist form. We had a lot of laws, and a mindset that anything communist was just beyond the pale, absolutely bad. My job every day was how to circumvent our restrictive regulations for dealing with communist countries regarding visas, or social security benefits, or something of that nature. And I think all of us were plugging away on this. We were also trying to understand the Yugoslav system. I think we reported down at the county level on what was happening, mainly through reading papers as you do in most countries. We could travel anywhere, and we could get out and talk to the people. We did a lot of traveling and we'd go talk to Communist Party headquarters, and factory places also on trips I would pick up hitchhikers and chat with them.

Q: What would you tell these people?

KENNEDY: We'd answer questions about America. Have you ever tried in a foreign language to explain the American educational system? We've got state, and local, and private, and religious. Try to explain this. It was a willing audience. There was nobody against us. We really in many ways didn't have a great problem. They also knew they didn't want the damned Russians coming in there again. During World War II the Russians had liberated part of the country by raping and pillaging, and the Yugoslavs didn't want that again.

THOMAS M. T. NILES
Political Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1963-1965)

Ambassador Thomas M. T. Niles was born in Kentucky in 1939. He received his bachelor's degree from Harvard University and master's from the University of Kentucky. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1962, he was positioned in Belgrade, Garmisch, Moscow and Brussels, and also served as the Ambassador to Canada and later to Greece. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 5, 1998.

Q: *Could you talk about the move to the Political Section? You were in the Consular Section, Political Section, and any other section?*

NILES: I spent my first six months in the Political Section. I was then in the Consular Section for six months. I then went to the Economic Section for six months. I spent a little less than six months in the Administrative Section, and then went back to the Economic Section, for the last three or four months I was there. I had more time in the Economic Section. I think that pushed me in the direction of concentrating on economic and commercial activities in my subsequent work in the Foreign Service, which in fact I did. I went from Belgrade to the economic office of the Soviet desk in the Department. I knew there was a rotational assignment, and worked for you in the Consular Section for six months. I was able to travel a lot. I had some marvelous field trips. I remember trips with Larry Eagleburger, Jim Lowenstein, and David Anderson, frequently in Bosnia-Herzegovina. When Bosnia came apart in 1992, we began to hear about places like Donji Vakuf and Bugonje or Banja Luka and Prijedor that we had visited in the early 1960s, driving one of those green "Jeep" station wagons that we had.

Q: *Looking at it, sometimes The State Department and those dealing with Foreign Affairs, are accused of (that is not really the right term) not wanting to upset whatever the existing thing is. In other words, the devil we know is better than the devil we don't know. Was this a factor in it?*

NILES: No question. But, let me just say, it is hard to look at what has happened in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia today and say that what replaced the political structures that existed of September 1, 1991 are better from the point of view, first and foremost, of the people who live there, and also of the United States. You can argue that we are better off with a broken up, weaker Russia, and an independent Ukraine, etc. I am not all together sure. I think the final story hasn't been written there. We certainly are better off without a imperialistic, expansionist Soviet Union, but by 1991, the Soviet Union had largely ceased to be that kind of a threat to the United States and our Allies, at least at that time. It was very unlikely, it seemed to me, that a similar threat would reemerge in the Soviet Union, which had become essentially a status quo power and very much concerned in the first instance with its own internal problems, which were insuperable ultimately. Nobody as far as I am aware could make a case that anybody, except the Slovenes, have benefitted as a result of the breakup of the Yugoslav Federation. The chaos of the millions of refugees, endless destruction, death, and misery which is going on today, particularly in Kosovo, but also in Bosnia and elsewhere, is just unbelievable. The price that we have all paid and continue to pay for the insane ambitions of Tudjman and Milosevic is beyond calculation.

So, yes, we tried every way we could to encourage some new structure in the former Yugoslavia. We supported efforts by Gligorov and Izetbegovic to cobble together some sort of Confederation. Secretary Baker clearly saw what was about to happen and told the leaders of Yugoslavia when he met them in Belgrade on June 21, 1991 that they were on a course toward "civil war and bloodshed." This was directed particularly at the Slovenes and Croatians, who were moving toward formal declarations of independence. Essentially, their answer was, "To hell with you. You don't know what you are talking about." Five days after Secretary Baker was in Belgrade, they declared independence on the June 26, 1991, and the rest is history. Secretary Baker saw that once you took Croatia and Slovenia out, in fact, once you took even little Slovenia out of the Yugoslav Federation, it was like a house of cards. You took one small piece out, and the whole structure became unstable. As when we were there in the 1960s, the Croatians and the Slovenes formed a kind of a mutual support society against the Serbs and the others, poorer people. Each reassured the other. But, if you took Slovenia out, it made it so much more difficult to keep Croatia in. If you took Slovenia and Croatia out, there was no way that Bosnia and Macedonia were going to stay in there with Serbia, which was so much too large for them. They needed Croatia and Slovenia in order to balance against Serbia. As weak as it was, the Yugoslav Federation 1991 was much better from the point of view of the individual peoples of that area, and from the point of view all of the surrounding countries, and of the United States, than what has followed. We tried to discourage the fracturing of the country, to discourage independence, keep the EU from recognizing Croatia and Slovenia. That was our big push in the fall 1991, against the wrong headed and nutty policies of the Federal Republic of Germany, specifically Genscher aimed at recognition of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. Genscher recognizes it now and refers to that policy as the greatest mistake of his career.

Q: *I want to catch it at the beginning there, because Washington revolves around, and decisions often revolve around, not only just what happens in the Secretary of State, but also in The Washington Post, The New York Times, or somebody interested in Congress. At the beginning, was there a general feeling that you were getting from the media, and maybe from Congress, that this was great, and Europe, at last, was going to take a problem off our backs?*

NILES: I can't ever recall that that point was emphasized. There were expressions of concern to be sure. I remember Senator Pell, in my confirmation hearing, asked me about it. So, some in Congress were concerned. It was limited, but at that time the atrocities and tragedies hadn't yet started, so there was no big pressure that the United States had to get involved in Yugoslavia. We had just fought a major military engagement against Iraq. We still had at that time 150,000 troops in the Gulf region. We were fast drawing down from Desert Storm, but we still had a substantial commitment out there. The idea that somehow we ought to leap from Desert Storm into what might be the Balkan storm, people thought, was crazy. There was no pressure from within the Administration that I can recall at that time that we should do anything. Certainly, in the White House, the NSC, the State Department, not to speak of the Defense Department, there was no readiness to take a major role in Yugoslavia.

Q: *So, how did things develop, then?*

NILES: Well, in September and October, the fighting intensified in Croatia. The Serbs used the Serbian population in the Krajina and Slavonia to set up these so-called "Republics" of Slavonia,

and Serb Krajina, driving the Croatian population out in most cases. The Serbian Army began, by the end of October, its assault on the town of Vukovar, standing off on the Serbian side of the Danube and shelling the city with 155 millimeter guns, just lobbing shells into the town, gradually destroying it and killing people. At the same time, the Serbs were bombarding Dubrovnik from near Trebinje in southwestern Bosnia-Herzegovina.

That was the time, looking back on it now, when some form of U.S. military intervention might have had an effect. In the Bureau, we talked about whether air strikes on Serbian artillery that was bombarding Vukovar and Dubrovnik, to pick two worthy cases, would send a hard message to Milosevic that he was engaging in unacceptable behavior. But when we tried to move this discussion beyond the strictly theoretical, we ran into a buzz saw of opposition, not in the Department itself but the other agencies. I think Deputy Secretary Eagleburger was attracted to the idea, but the Pentagon, both JCS and OSD, thought we were lunatics. The question that was asked was, "Okay, you bomb the Serb artillery. They put in new guns. What do you do then?" Of course, we didn't have the answer to that. Basically, we raised the question, "Should the United States use its military power?" which at that time, in the wake of Desert Storm, looked as if whatever we wanted to do, we could do it. We felt that if we could send missiles into the window of a barn or down the streets at Baghdad and turn left at the second stop light, we could certainly send a message to Milosevic. It would have been difficult. Vukovar is a little bit far inland, but using F15Es out of Aviano would have been simple enough. Hitting the Serbian guns that were bombarding Dubrovnik would have been easy. Overall, it would not have been a militarily difficult thing to do. Would we have lost airplanes? Probably not. But, you couldn't be absolutely sure. After all, we lost some airplanes when we went in the Gulf War. You couldn't be absolutely sure that you wouldn't have losses, and you also couldn't be at all sure what the outcome would be, what kind of a message Milosevic might draw from this.

In retrospect, I think we missed a tremendous opportunity. We should have gone in, not just with one strike, but with some serious military actions. If we had gone in, not against Belgrade, but to hit the artillery batteries across the Danube from Vukovar and near Trebinje, that would have been a powerful signal. How it would have been read by Milosevic, who knows. But, the idea that there are limits to what was acceptable was an important message to send. In any case, it wasn't sent. In October 1991, Ambassador Zimmerman came back to Washington with essentially that recommendation. We met in the morning with Deputy Secretary Eagleburger. I thought that Larry supported Warren's idea. After lunch, the three of us then went to a small meeting in the White House sitroom [situation room] with Bob Gates, then Deputy National Security Advisor, Lieutenant General Shalikashvili, then Military Assistant to the Chairman, Lieutenant General Ed Leland, then head of J-5 (Policy and Plans) in the JCS, Steve Hadley, then Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy (OSD/ISP) and David Gompert, the NSC man for Europe. Dick Kerr and John Halverson were there for CIA. I believe they were the DDO and DDI, respectively.

Warren presented his proposal for air attacks on the Serbian artillery being used against Vukovar and Dubrovnik. I thought he did an excellent job. The other agency representatives present were either opposed (OSD, JCS and Gates) or non-committal (Kerr, Halverson, Gompert and Eagleburger). I supported Warren. At one point, Gates left to call General Scowcroft, who was traveling with President Bush. Gates came back to the meeting with the word that Scowcroft and

the President would not support such an action. And that was that. We never again reached even that degree of specificity in discussing a United States military response to Serbian aggression during the Bush Administration.

Q: *Did you sense, at this time, that this was, in a way, a peculiar war, in that there seemed to be an awful lot of reliance on almost indiscriminate artillery firing, and not really very serious, real troop movement?*

NILES: Well, you have to remember what we are talking about here, Stu. We are talking about the Serbian Army, the so-called Yugoslav National Army, the YPA. That was an army developed by Tito, but very much on the Soviet model, and based on Soviet military experience in the Second World War. Now, what would that Soviet military experience in the Second World War suggest? Among other things, it would emphasize massive artillery bombardments such as the Soviets did to Warsaw and Berlin. You stand off, you mass as many 155's and 205's as you can and you fire them off against your target for an extended period, then you see what the situation is. Vukovar and later Sarajevo were like Warsaw or Berlin. This was the Serbian military tactic. For example, at one point in October or November 1991, the Serbs were firing FROG (Free Rocket Over Ground) missiles at Zagreb. Now, the FROG is about as accurate as shooting an arrow into the wind. You know it is going to hit somewhere, but you don't know exactly where. They were firing these rockets, with a range of about 75 to 100 kilometers, maybe a little bit more, into Zagreb from the area south of Karlovac in the Lika region. No one knew where they were going to land, in the old town or in the new town, or out of town altogether. Wherever they came down, they did a lot of damage but, even more, it terrorized the civilian population. But, that was the very much Milosevic's style. It was like Hitler's use of the V-1 buzz bomb in the Second World War. They wanted to destroy things, but they particularly wanted to terrorize people. Mass artillery fire puts a maximum hurt on the other guy, and minimizes your losses, since he doesn't have any tube artillery. In a sense, it was a cost-free, painless way for Milosevic to meet his objectives, which he did. So I think what we were seeing there was the Serbian application of Soviet military doctrine. They did it, and very successfully. They blitzed Vukovar and did considerable damage in Dubrovnik. Vukovar was much more important to them. They wanted to take all of Eastern Slavonia, which they did. What would have happened if we had gotten involved then? Who knows?

One of the lesson I took away from this experience is that the State Department was at a pronounced disadvantage because none of us had the military knowledge or capabilities to say, "Well, here is the operational plan." We were dependent upon the Pentagon, and they were dead set against any US military involvement. By the way, in present this option in October 1991, we did not simply suggest that we should start bombing the Serbian artillery emplacements opposite Vukovar and above Dubrovnik. Rather, we presented this as part of an overall plan that would have sought to mobilize international support for our plan and use the threat of bombing to stop the shelling. But we agreed that we had to be prepared, from the beginning, to move to the use of force if the Serbs refused to yield to political pressures. I am leaping ahead, but I remember another meeting at the NSC, this time almost a year later in October 1992, when the focus had shifted away from Vukovar and Dubrovnik to Sarajevo. This meeting included some of the cast of characters who were there in October 1991. General Shalikashvili had been replaced by that time by Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey. Ed Leland was still there, I think. Ed was replaced

by McCaffrey around that time, and Lieutenant General Mike Ryan replaced Bary as Assistant to the Chairman. Paul Wolfowitz was there as Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and Steve Hadley and David Gompert were there. Gates had left the NSC for the CIA and had been replaced by Vice Admiral Jon Howe. Finally, Eagleburger by that time was Acting Secretary, and he had opted out of most of the Yugoslavia mess. Arnold Kanter, who was Under Secretary for Political Affairs, was the senior State representative, and I was there also. We were under a lot of pressure from outside the Administration to "do something" about the situation in Bosnia, and I noted that we really needed to think hard about what we could do in the way of using military force. I said, "Haven't you guys got some plans we could use? We have military forces all around us. Let's talk about whether this plan would work or that plan would work." The answer from Wolfowitz was, "If President Bush wants to discuss military options in Yugoslavia, he should raise that with the Chairman, and the Chairman will discuss military options with him." In other words, "Assistant Secretaries in the State Department should shut up." Wolfowitz then went on to ask whether we had our diplomatic strategy developed to support the use of force by the United States. I said that we could surely develop one but that before we could do so, we needed to know what it was we were talking about. So, we were at a very big disadvantage in all these discussions with representatives of OSD and JCS. They were, at the time, totally committed to keeping us out, militarily, of former Yugoslavia.

The other side of their position was that if the President were to decide to use force in Yugoslavia, we were going to go in and really clean things up. I remember at the beginning of the Clinton administration, Secretary Christopher was being educated in a crash course in Yugoslavia. I was at a meeting with him (one of the few I attended with him). Lieutenant General Barry McCaffrey was the principal JCS briefer. He had by that time replaced Ed Leland as head of J5. This was before he received his fourth star and went to SOUTHCOM. Secretary Christopher said to the group, "Well, now, if we were going to intervene in Bosnia militarily to try to stop the fighting and to establish stability, what would that require?" General McCaffrey looked across the table at the Secretary of State, and said, "Well, Mr. Secretary, I think that would take a field army." Secretary Christopher said, "What's that? What does that mean, General?" He said, "Oh, about 400,000 troops." You could see all the blood rush out of Secretary Christopher's face. He said, "You are telling me that if we want to get involved in Bosnia, in an effective way, it would require 400,000 troops?" The General said, "Anything less, would be too big a risk." That was the attitude. If it seems that I am being critical of my military colleagues, I am not, because, in effect, they were right. Because ground troops in sizeable numbers, were absolutely required. Those who used to talk boldly about going in and cleaning the Serbs up with air power, cruise missiles, smart bombs, or one thing or the other, really didn't know what they were talking about. We could have sent a message. As General Powell used to say when he would talk with him about this issue at NSC meetings, "You can punish from the air, but you establish realities on the ground." When I heard him say that, I thought, "This is the infantry man talking." But I can see now that he was absolutely right." In 1991-93 when I was involved, up through April of 1993, if you talked about using ground troops in former Yugoslavia, you were talking about the United States Army or Marine Corps. There was no other ground force in the area. You weren't talking about the German Army, the French Army, or the British Army, or some other Army, it was the United States Army or the Marine Corps, that was going to go in there to do this. You had to be serious about it and recognize that.

So, when the events of the summer and fall of 1995 occurred, and we got to Dayton, people looked and said, "Why didn't we do this in 1992?" People looked at the U.S. involvement, and all it involved was air strikes against Serbian targets in Bosnia. We lost one plane but rescued the pilot, and we obviously put a heavy hit on the Serbs. What people who made that argument missed was that the ground forces in 1995 were supplied by the Croatians and to a lesser extent by the Bosnians. What brought the Serbs to Dayton in November/December 1995 was not the air war but the fact that the Serbs lost on the ground, the fact that the Croatians had kicked the Serbs out of the Krajina region and most all of Slavonia, and large parts of Bosnia. The Croatians were the ground force by that time, and they were good, at least compared to the Serbs. But, in 1991-94, there was no Croatian Army. It didn't even exist, except in the mind of President Franjo Tudjman. General Powell was right: you have to have ground forces. The difference between 1992 and 1995 was that in 1992 the only ground forces available would have been from the United States. In 1995, the Croatians did it. There is a great story out there that has not been told about how this Croatian army came into being, about who provided the arms and training. Basically, it was our friends the Germans, with help from us and others, in direct contravention of the UN Security Council arms embargo on all of the former Yugoslavia that was imposed in November 1991.

Q: *Here you have the Soviet Union, which is no longer considered as great a threat, and you had a big NATO Army sitting there. Why was it that you were thinking of an American field Army or the Marine Corps going in?*

NILES: Well, you had NATO forces, to be sure. But, Italian and German forces were ruled out from the start, because of the Second World War. Maybe we exaggerated this, but we just couldn't see sending the Bundeswehr into Bosnia. The Germans would not have gone. Subsequently, the Germans have gotten involved there, after Dayton. They have done a good job, and they crossed the Rubicon. Now, I think, we can look to Germany for assistance in such cases, but then we could not. I don't know whether we could expect a Red/Green coalition with Joschka Fischer as Foreign Minister to undertake such a role, but he has come a long way on these issues, and Germany is now a full participant in the military side of the alliance outside the NATO area. In 1991-92, we also thought that Italy was ruled out because of WWII, but the Italians got involved in post-Dayton Bosnia. So, in 1991-93, you were left, in terms of serious military forces, with the French and the British. But, even they did not have forces that could be deployed into Bosnia in something other than a peacekeeping mode, which they did in UNPROFOR, which was a disaster. The only force that was big enough, tough enough, equipped well enough to do the job in 1991-94 was the United States Army or the Marine Corps, or both. It would have required that. We could have bombed the Bosnian Serbs and the Serbian Serbs, but I don't think that alone would have solved our problem.

Q: *Were you feeling any particular problem with the Yugoslav desk officers, because this came up later on? But, at this time, it was a nasty situation, but we weren't getting around our throats being cut, things like that.*

NILES: The problems came up over Bosnia. For some reason, the terrible refugee problems that emerged in Croatia, when the Croatians and the non-Serbian population were driven out of the Krajina and out of Slavonia, didn't quite register in quite the same way as Bosnia. It was ethnic

cleansing, perhaps on a more limited scale, and perhaps not quite as violently, and it didn't really register in the same way in the West. We certainly saw it as a serious problem, and we looked for ways to stop the fighting. What did we do? We had a lot of consultations with the Europeans. I participated in those. They didn't have any particular effect. In the fall of 1991, we sought to persuade the Europeans not to recognize the Slovenes and the Croatians as independent countries. That was a strong pitch by Secretary Baker.

Q: *What about the Dutch?*

NILES: The Dutch were in the Presidency, and I think, bear some responsibility. But the Dutch are very influenced by the Germans. They might not like that, but it happens to be a fact. We got support from the French, and the Greeks, and to a degree, from the British, in saying, "Hey, let's slow the train down here." There was an initiative that had been undertaken by Izetbegovic and Gligorov essentially to create...

Q: *Gligorov being?*

NILES: He was the President of Macedonia.

Q: *Izetbegovic being Bosnian?*

NILES: Right. As I was saying, this was an initiative to create a Yugoslav Confederation. That idea was alive, at least until most of the world, or an important part of the world, recognized the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. Once that happened, it was awfully hard to "put Humpty Dumpty back together again." It might have never worked. It was a real long shot, but it was a long shot that, if it had succeeded, carried with it, some significant advantages. By the way, one thing to keep in mind, is that throughout this period, even when the Serbs were bombarding Vukovar and driving Croatians out of the villages in Slavonia and the Krajina, and shooting FROG missiles into Zagreb, Tudjman and Milosevic were plotting the dismemberment and division of Bosnia. Even then!

Q: *They were greedy, weren't they?*

NILES: Yes. When they weren't meeting, their subordinates were meeting to plot the plan, and draw maps. It was very much like Hitler and Stalin, Ribbentrop and Molotov over Poland, or Maria Theresa and Friedrich the Great over Poland in 1770.

Q: *Well, they were fighting each other.*

NILES: That's all right. Hitler and Stalin, rhetorically, were fighting each other. There is a wonderful British cartoonist showing Hitler and Stalin shaking hands over the body of Poland. One is saying, "The scum of the earth, I believe." The other is saying, "The assassin of the working class, I presume."

Q: *Lowe?*

NILES: Yes, by Lowe. It was a superb cartoon, but Milosevic and Tudjman were essentially doing the same thing with Bosnia. They had the most unbelievably negative things to say about each other, publicly. But privately, those were two guys who could cut a deal, and tried to.

Q: *Did you get any feel, while you were trying to put this together, particularly you, having been the Ambassador to EU, that the EU was enjoying that "Back here, we are really doing something, and you Americans stay out of it. You don't really understand?"*

NILES: Well, that lasted for about a month. By October 1, 1991, the European Union was beginning to realize that they had a tiger by the tail, that it was not a good situation, and they were wondering what their next move was going to be. They were trying to get us in by then. We were saying to them, "Hey, if you want to get us in, be sensible." But, they were not prepared to step back from their plans to recognize Slovenia and Croatia as independent states. We took a step in November 1991 which subsequently turned out to be ill-advised. But, in looking around for things to do, without intervening militarily in the war between Croatia and Serbia, we intervened politically and tried to get them to stop fighting, in part through the imposition, through the U.N. Security Council, of a Chapter 7 arms embargo on all of former Yugoslavia, including Slovenia, Bosnia and Macedonia, all of it. At the time it seemed a reasonable thing to do, but it turned out to be a very misguided move. What it did was give the Serbs an even greater advantage because they had all the military equipment they could possibly use, and they were using it against everybody else. The Croatians and the Bosnians didn't have much military equipment and the embargo made it more difficult for them to acquire military equipment.

Q: *Was there any concern about this at the time?*

NILES: No. I don't recall anybody even mentioning it. There may have been somebody who asked whether we were thinking this thing through, but I don't remember anybody saying that. It was a mistake. It profited us nothing and helped the Serbs.

Q: *The Bosnians still don't forget this.*

NILES: That travesty began a little later. This was November 1991, but it was a dumb move.

Q: *Senator Dole was a major force on Bosnia, later on. I mean, it seemed to be almost his mantra of arms to the Bosnians. Did that start, or am I mistaken?*

NILES: I think you are right, but that really came after. It was in 1993 and beyond, after I left. He was not involved during the time I was there. Kosovo was a big issue for him. Somehow I recall that the US Army doctor who treated him after he was so severely wounded in Italy during WWII was of Albanian descent, and the doctor had a continuing relationship with the Senator.

Q: *I always think of my interpreter when I was in Bosnia for an election a year ago, who said that he was a good Muslim. He was a Captain in the Bosnian Army when he wasn't chasing girls and drinking. I asked him how often he went to the Mosque. He said that he had never been in one, but he was a good Muslim anyway.*

NILES: Those guys never darkened the door of a mosque. The mosques were historical places. They were respected, as far as I could tell, but they were certainly not used. Now, of course, you see Muslim women in Bosnia going around with head scarves and people praying in the (rebuilt) mosques. This was all a reaction to the brutality of the Serbs, and to a degree, the brutality of the Croatians. Sop, who is most responsible for the destruction of Yugoslavia? Milosevic and the Serbs were the chief offenders, but Tudjman and the Croatians played a key supporting role. If you ask who is primarily responsible for the humanitarian disaster in Bosnia, the answer is Milosevic, and his Serbian cohorts, Karadzic, Mladic, and Arkon. These people are war criminals. But, the Croatians did terrible things there, too. The Croatians were the ones who, in the area of Herzegovina around Mostar, destroyed all the mosques and blew up everything.

Q: *I just came back last month from near Banja Luka. It is the Croatians who are the villains, as far as the Serbs who were voting, were concerned. Another villain on this scene was the Pope. In the first place, what were relations? Normally, if we send somebody to be our Ambassador to the Vatican, he or she is a good Catholic. It is a throwaway, political appointment. Did we have any connection with the Catholic church, either here in Washington, or in Rome, where we were "talking turkey" about how bad this would be if you had a breakdown in Yugoslavia?*

NILES: As I recall, the Apostolic Delegate here steered very clear of political discussions with us, at least in my experience, because of his official accreditation. While he is the Ambassador of the Pope, I think he saw his principal responsibility as the link with the United States Catholic hierarchy, not with the United States Government, at least on political issues. On humanitarian and human rights issues, he was involved, but not on what could be seen as political issues. When I was in EUR, we had relatively little to do with the people at the Apostolic Delegate's office, although Archbishop Turon did come to the State Department once to discuss Yugoslavia with me when he was visiting Washington. Now, in Rome, it is a different story. The Bush administration was well represented, I think, at the Vatican, although the United States has not always been well represented there. I am not pointing fingers at specific people, but Tom Melady, who was our Ambassador to the Vatican during the Bush administration, was a very intelligent, wise man who was the President of Catholic University, I think. He had excellent ties with the Cardinal Secretary of State Sodano. Cardinal Silvestrini was involved in these issues, as was Archbishop Turon. I think Cardinal Casaroli had retired or was in the process of retiring. He had been the foreign minister of the Vatican forever. He was the Genscher of the Vatican. Turon, who was a French Archbishop, now Cardinal, and Silvestrini, obviously Italian, were the key guys. Our impression at the time was that the Vatican policy in Eastern Europe, including former Yugoslavia, was very much the province of the Pope. This was an area which he knew and about which he felt very strongly. So the key policy directions were established by the Pope. Of course, you could say that Vatican policy, worldwide, is established by the Pope, but I think it was even more so in Eastern Europe. He was the key actor.

Q: *Did we see him trying to recognize Croatia? I mean, were we trying to put a damper on...*

NILES: We made clear to the Holy Sea what our position was. Our position was that we thought that recognition of the independence of the component parts of former Yugoslavia was a mistake. We did not intend to do that, and others should not. We argued for trying to find some mechanism to keep these entities together and prevent a wider war. Whenever we made this

argument, we would always point to Bosnia. We would say, "Come on guys, be serious. It is one thing in Slovenia. Croatia is ethnically mixed, at least it was then, until all the Serbs were driven out. But what about Bosnia? Bosnia was an incredible hodgepodge of nationalities. What are you going to do with that?"

Q: *Were we doing anything about this process, I mean, post-recognition? Were the Germans leading the way in the Vatican getting in? How did we see things developing at that time?*

NILES: This was post-December 17, 1991. Once Germany and the Vatican recognized, it was clear that the others were going to do it too. We stepped back a little bit. We didn't recognize, obviously. It was a set back for American foreign policy, a development that we had opposed and tried unsuccessfully to head off. It was something that created a new environment for us, so we stood back a little bit and asked, "Now what?" During January 1992, an armistice signed between Croatia and Serbia, and the fighting largely stopped in Croatia. Thirty percent or so of Croatia was effectively controlled by the Serbs. The active fighting between the Serbian Army and the Croatians, to the extent they had an Army, stopped in January 1992. We had a relative lull in the former Yugoslavia, in during which we were adjusting to the recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia by the EU and others, who followed suit, and to the cease fire between Croatia and Serbia. Attention then turned to Bosnia. It was inevitable, particularly after the fighting ended between Serbia and Croatia. The question came up, "Well, what about Bosnia?" We encouraged Izetbegovic to do nothing rash, and urged him and Gligorov to keep working on their plan. We pointed out that we had not recognized the independence of Slovenia and Croatia, and we after all were the United States of America. They understood that, but at the same time, the European Union had recognized the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. The position of the Macedonians and the Bosnians was that they could not stay in a confederation with Milosevic without the Croatians and the Slovenians. Gligorov knew that the Serbs have always regarded Macedonia, ever since Tito created a separate Macedonia in December 1944, as part of Serbia, as it was from 1913 to 1944 when it was called the Vardarska Banovina. As far as the Serbs were concerned, they had fought and died for Macedonia in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, and who was Tito to take it away from them. That was the Serbian attitude on Macedonia. It is certainly the Serbian attitude today and will always be the Serbian attitude. I remember a meeting that we had with Gligorov in December 1991. We said, "Hey, let's keep working on this, and see if we can work out a Confederation." He said, "Come on, a confederation with Milosevic? With two million of us, and ten million Serbs." We said, "Well, you would have Bosnia and Montenegro with you." He didn't dismiss Bosnia, but he said, "Look, without Croatia and Slovenia, this is not a runner." We really didn't have an alternative. EU recognition of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia killed our policy, which was based on this confederation idea.

We turned our attention to Bosnia. The question was, at that time, was "Should Bosnia move toward independence?" We told Izetbegovic, "Cool it. Don't do it." Warren Zimmerman was down there several times, saying, "Go slowly, see what happens. Don't shake the tree." But, Izetbegovic was under a lot of pressure from people on his team. This was pressure from Salagic and younger people. Izetbegovic was an older guy. He have been near 80 years, an intellectual and a scholar. He has written, I am told, some interesting stuff. He is a very slow moving guy. He is not a man for dramatic moves, but he was under a lot of pressure within his party, the

Bosnian Democratic Party, from younger people who were less temperate, less moderate than he. After December 1991, he felt that he had to move ahead toward independence. In the meantime, the Serbs in Bosnia were agitating, using the Yugoslav Army to create problems. Bosnia was the heart of Tito's military system. A large part of the munitions and arms were stored there, in underground depots. They even had an underground air field in northern Bosnia, with hangars built into the mountains. This was where Tito was going to take his refuge when the Warsaw Pact invaded, as crazy as that would seem. There was a big Yugoslav military base in Sarajevo at the Marshall Tito barracks. The question came up, "Well, what are these guys going to do?" There was agitation throughout the Republic and it was clear that the Serbs were getting ready to move against Bosnia, internally and externally, and that the Army was part of this. This was already clear in January 1992.

The next stage in the tragedy was the Bosnian referendum, which happened to be on the February 29 1992. The question was, "Should we go for independence, or should we remain in Yugoslavia?" The Serbs boycotted it. The Croatians participated, as did the Bosnians. The vote, predictably, was strongly in favor of independence. We had discouraged Izetbegovic from going forward with the referendum, but he did it anyway. By all accounts, it was well run and very democratic, but the vast majority of the Serbs boycotted it. In retrospect, the referendum was a catastrophic error on Izetbegovic's part because it forced the issue of Bosnian independence at a time when they were totally incapable of doing anything about it. Even before the referendum, the Yugoslav Army was supporting the Serbs in Bosnia and was beginning the process of dismembering the territory, and establishing stronger military positions. There were demonstrations in Sarajevo by the population there against the Yugoslav Army, which was equivalent to the Serbian Army. Ralph Johnson and Warren Zimmerman negotiated a solution to that with Defense Minister Kadejevic.

Q: *Who is Ralph Johnson?*

NILES: Ralph Johnson was my principal deputy and is now Ambassador to Slovakia. You ought to talk to him about this, because he had some extraordinary sessions, eight hours straight in one case, with Milosevic during this period. He will be a very good source. But, he and Warren negotiated, ultimately, the peaceful departure of the Yugoslav Army with their heavy arms from the Marshall Tito barracks in Sarajevo. This was in March 1992, around the time of independence. But, the Yugoslav Army was clearly helping the Serbs. It was a Serbian Army, with a lot of Bosnian Serbs. We were then faced with the hopeless situation, asking ourselves what we should do when Izetbegovic declared independence. We were under a lot of pressure from the Europeans to join them and recognize Croatia and Slovenia. It was clear they were not going to take that back. So, reluctantly, at the end of March, we reached the decision that Humpty Dumpty could not be put back together again. We decided to recognize the independence of all three, Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia. We went to the Europeans and told them that we would join them on Slovenia and Croatia, but that they had to join us in recognizing Bosnian independence, also. Our rationale, which I admit you can question, and we looked at it from both perspectives, was that if we recognize Croatia and Slovenia, and not Bosnia, it would essentially be a signal to the Serbs and the Croats to dismember it. We had to do something because Izetbegovic, on the basis of the referendum, was going to declare independence on April 5 or 6, 1992. We decided that we ought to recognize the independence of

all three and convince the Europeans to go ahead on Bosnia. It didn't take much convincing. They agreed with us that as bad as it was, this was not as bad as not recognizing Bosnia. Today, still, you can cut it both ways. Did we make a mistake? Would it have been different if we had not recognized Bosnian independence on the 6th of April 1992? I really don't think so, because the Serbs were already engaged in their effort to seize as much as they could of Bosnia before we recognized it.

Q: *Were the Croatians looking at it too?*

NILES: Ooh yes! They had their knives and forks out. It was like Frederick the Great talking about Maria Teresa at the time of the second partition of Poland. When Maria Teresa expressed concern about the people of Poland, Frederick the Great said, "The more she wept, the more she ate." If Tudjman were expressing concerns about the people of Bosnia, he would have done so with his knife and fork, ready to eat as much as he could.

There are some other things we need to talk about, like the fall of the Soviet Union.

Q: *Oh yes, little matters like that, but we have been concentrating on Yugoslavia. We have talked about the steps leading up to the recognition of Bosnia in April 1992, and how Serbia and Croatia were already getting as you say,"their knives and forks out" to take it. One of the questions I would like to ask, around this time, is, What were you getting as we moved into this period, from the NSC? Then, Scowcroft was a very powerful National Security Advisor. He had also had Serbia/Yugoslavia experience. One is struck by the fact that you have Larry Eagleburger, you, Scowcroft, and others...*

NILES: You had more expertise on Yugoslavia at the highest levels of the US government - I wouldn't count myself in that - but with Eagleburger and Scowcroft, you had more expertise on Yugoslavia at the top reaches of the United States national security policy establishment than at any time in our history. The issue was right there and I can't say that we necessarily got it right. But, again, what could we have done differently?

Q: *Well, the Balkans are the Balkans.*

NILES: Maybe it was fated to be this way. I think General Scowcroft can speak for himself on this. On his staff, David Gompert was the person most involved on Yugoslav issues. Gompert tilted a little bit more to the activist side. His attitude was, "We have to do something. We have to be engaged there." But, he was not in favor of military involvement. General Scowcroft was very restrained in his enthusiasm for getting involved in Yugoslavia.

Q: *Representing the military side?*

NILES: Well, representing the President. Remember that 1992, among other things, was presidential election year.

Q: *And also, the Secretary of State, as you said.*

NILES: That was a top-flight foreign policy team. I am not criticizing it, and was honored to be a small part of it. It was the best national security policy leadership that we had had in a long time with President Bush, Secretary Baker, Secretary Cheney, General Scowcroft and General Powell. They worked together well. That was a very collegial group of people. Obviously, they disagreed from time to time, but the kind of State vs. NSC, State vs. Defense nonsense that we frequently get into in the United States Government, was largely absent during the Bush administration. That was a top-flight team, with good people in every job. I am sure they disagreed on some things, but one thing that all five of them agreed on, from the beginning to the end of the Bush administration, was that we should not become militarily involved in former Yugoslavia.

Q: *So, then, we will pick this up...*

NILES: Let me again make one other point here. The issue was not detached in space and time. It was an election year.

Q: *In April 1992, what was the situation?*

NILES: In April 1992, an armistice or cease fire was in effect between Croatia and Serbia. Serbia was occupying about one-third of Croatia: most of the Krajina region and large parts of Slavonia. A Bosnian referendum was held on February 29, 1992, with a substantial majority for independence, but most Serbs boycotted it. During March, there were increasing efforts by the Serbs to seize territory and destabilize the situation in Bosnia, aided by a very substantial Yugoslav military detachment in Bosnia, including in Sarajevo. Maybe we'll talk about this a little later, but there was a problem with the Yugoslav forces at the Marshall Tito barracks in Sarajevo that occupied us quite a bit in early April. In any case, on April 5, 1992, Izetbegovic declared the independence of Bosnia. The fighting had really broken out during March. The efforts led by Karadzic and Mladic, which were directed, of course, by Milosevic, were aimed at seizing as much territory in Bosnia as possible. We were faced with the question of what to do. We decided that the least bad course of action, and it wasn't the greatest, but the least bad course of action, was to recognize Bosnian independence, along with that of Croatia and Slovenia. So, we joined with our European allies on the April 6, 1992, I think it was, in recognizing independence of all three states. We recognized all three at that time; the Europeans recognized the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They had already, in January, recognized the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. Of course, the fighting intensified.

Q: *Excuse me, Tom, but when we were recognizing Croatia, was it implicit in what we were thinking and all, that the Serb changes and boundaries eventually would go back to where they were?*

NILES: We recognized Croatia with the boundaries that it had in former Yugoslavia. What we assumed regarding the ultimate boundaries between Croatia and Serbia, I can't really say. We didn't assume. It was just too unclear at that time what was going to happen, but as far as we were concerned, the boundaries were the boundaries, and whether they were the right boundaries or not, they were the only ones we could recognize. We weren't going to redraw the internal boundaries. We regarded those as fixed and we recognized them. That applied to all of the republics. Macedonia, for example, is in the same category as Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia,

Croatia and Slovenia. In any case, the fighting intensified during April. We began to get really horrific reports of ethnic cleansing. As a matter of fact, Karadzic, who was nothing if not frank and outspoken, first used the term "ethnic cleansing," to describe what they were doing. It was sometime in April. This was in reference to the towns in Eastern Bosnia, along the Drina River, from Zvornik all the way south, down through Visegard, and Foca. These towns, prior to March 1992, had been largely Muslim. All the Muslims were driven out. They took refuge in the countryside or took off for Sarajevo. Then, all across northern Bosnia, you had atrocious things going on with the Yugoslav Army, to a degree, but more often Bosnian Serb groups detached from the Army, and irregulars from Serbia led by criminals such as Raznatovic/Arkon and his "Tigers" terrorizing the non-Serbian population, driving them out and killing people. Ultimately, prison camps were established in places like Omarska, near Prijedor, in northern Bosnia. We had reports on all this but we had nobody there to verify them. Nobody from the embassy could get down there. We didn't have anyone in Sarajevo at that time. The reports that we got were from refugees. They were, of course, garbled and not totally clear, but what was clear was that terrible things were going on. We worked in NATO and at the UN with our allies, with the Russians and the Chinese. Around June 1, 1992, the UN Security Council condemned Serbia for its actions in Bosnia and adopted comprehensive economic sanctions on Serbia/Montenegro. If you consider the sentimental support of Russia for the Serbs, obtaining Russian support for the resolution was quite a triumph. On June 2, 1992, we went with Secretary Baker to a meeting in Lisbon, which was the second of three meetings during 1992 on aid to the former Soviet Union. The Chapter VII economic sanctions on Serbia, some of which are still on today, were a very blunt weapon and they did not work very quickly, but they did, ultimately, have quite an impact on the Serbian economy. I think they contributed to the readiness of Milosevic to cut the deal he cut at Dayton and basically to give up the largest part of what the Serbs had seized in Bosnia, as well as many of the other areas that were so important to the Serbs, including the Krajina and Slavonia (except the Easternmost tip, which was returned to Croatia later). This left Serbia bankrupt and full of refugees, humiliated and still under sanctions. It was an extraordinary failure by any stretch of the imagination, yet this man remains President of Serbia.

Q: *Along with Saddam Hussein.*

NILES: Well, Milosevic is very much like Saddam Hussein in this respect. He respects only one thing, and that is a guy with a big fist. If you don't have a big fist, you don't need to deal with Milosevic, and are prepared to use it, you have a chance with him. In any case, we were under pressure from the Congress, from then Governor Clinton, throughout the summer of 1992, to "do something" about Bosnia. It was a terrible situation. Reports came out about death camps in Bosnia. Richard Boucher, who was standing in for Margaret Tutwiler at a State Department noon press briefing at the beginning of July 1992 was asked about a report in the *Long Island Newsday* about "death camps" in Bosnia. Boucher was asked whether he could confirm these reports, and he somewhat injudiciously said, "Yes, we can confirm those reports." The natural reaction was, "The Serbs are running death camps out there, and you aren't doing anything." Coincidentally, I had to testify the next day before the Europe and Middle East Subcommittee of the House International Affairs Committee, with Chairman Hamilton and others. I was asked about Boucher's confirmation that there were death camps in Northern Bosnia, and whether this was right. I said, "No, as a matter of fact, I can't confirm that. We have press reports to that effect, that there are prison camps and terrible atrocities are being committed, but we have no

independent confirmation yet on whether that is true or not." I didn't have it, maybe others did. In any case, I said, "To use the term 'death camp' strikes me as being maybe a little bit inaccurate, because for me, a death camp is Auschwitz, or someplace like that, run by the Nazis, where people are being systematically exterminated." In real life, even though thousands of people, perhaps hundreds of thousands of people died in Bosnia, to say that the Serbs are running death camps, might be a little bit of a stretch. They really wanted not so much to kill all the Bosnian Muslims but to drive them out. Of course, if in the process of driving them out, lots of people died, they would shed no tears. But to say that the Serbs were running "death camps" in Bosnia, I felt then, and I feel now, was an exaggeration. Believe me, I don't have any sympathy at all for the Serbs, in terms of what they did in Bosnia or elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia. At the session with the House International Affairs Committee, Tom Lantos of California accused me of complicity in war crimes, which I thought was a nice touch. There was a lot of pressure on the Bush administration to "do something." Basically, when people talked about "doing something," they meant using military force, in some way, to stop the terrible atrocities that were going on in Bosnia. On the U.S. side, there was no support at all in the Administration, at a senior level, for doing that. There was very strong opposition to military action from the Pentagon, both from Secretary Cheney and from General Powell and all the Chiefs. All the other people who worked with Secretary Cheney in the Defense Department were of the same mind.

Q: *There is pressure coming, but were there voices in Congress saying to just use military force?*

NILES: They were not quite that explicit. But, President, then-Governor Clinton, by July, was attacking the administration on the grounds that we weren't doing enough in Bosnia, and that he would do more. He was not specific, but he said he would do more. The Democrats, in the Congress, at that time the majority party in the House and Senate, were really hard on us. I remember once, Steve Hadley, Lieutenant General Shalikashvili and I, testified before the Senate Arms Services Committee. I remember Senator Kennedy was outraged at something I said about the situation in Bosnia. "Why don't you guys do more," he asked? We had imposed economic sanctions on Serbia under Chapter VII, and we were putting massive political pressure on the Serbs, but Mladic and Karadzic were riding high in Bosnia at that time. They probably had 75 to 80% of the territory in one way or another. There wasn't a lot we could do. Our Europeans Allies were not anymore inclined than we were, at that time, to use military force.

Q: *When somebody like Senator Kennedy would come at you, a natural retort would seem to be, "Senator, do you say we should put military forces in," or was it that you just didn't say that?*

NILES: We said something like, "We are not prepared to do that. Are you recommending that?" He waffled, as I recall and said something like "Well, no, I don't recommend that, but you have to do more." Basically, it wasn't specifically that we had to intervene militarily in the former Yugoslavia. Now, by that time, there was a U.N. force deployed in Croatia, UNPROFOR, to police the truce between Serbia and Croatia. In a momentous decision, elements of "UNPROFOR" in the summer of 1992 were sent into Bosnia. This was a lightly-armed peacekeeping force. In Croatia, there was a peace to keep, but in Bosnia, there was not. Thus, we created in this way the truly impossible mess for the United Nations. It had a lightly armed force without the capability or the mandate to protect itself in a war zone, which was what it was. "UNPROFOR's" rules of engagement were unless somebody comes up and pulls a gun on you

and starts to shoot, you can't shoot back. The U.N. was unable to do anything. There were these unfortunate troops there, from France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Spain and several other countries. The Dutch were in Srebrenica, with disastrous results in May 1995. There were also Russians and Ukrainians, who spent all their time selling equipment and arms to the Serbs and engaging in the black market activity. It was an impossible situation. Tragically, the British and the French, in particular, took substantial casualties. I think the French probably lost maybe as many as 25 or 30 people in Bosnia. They were mainly killed by the Serbs. They couldn't defend themselves.

Q: *What was your attitude, both personally, and around you, at this time? We are talking, April, June, toward the U.N. action down there. Was the Secretary General Perez de Cuellar still?*

NILES: No, it was Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Q: *I mean Boutros Boutros Ghali, and, what was the role of the Russians in this?*

NILES: There really were no serious proposals advanced, except perhaps by some of the Islamic countries, Turkey and others, Saudi Arabia, maybe. The Saudis were upset about what was happening in Bosnia to the Muslim and by the evident effort by the Serbs to eradicate all traces of Muslim culture in Bosnia. This included destroying all the mosques. But, nobody was seriously proposing to become involved in a combat role. The mistake with UNPROFOR was that we sent a peacekeeping force there to keep a peace that didn't exist. You can't keep peace if there isn't one. Nobody was going to make peace in Bosnia, not the Serbs, not the Bosnians, not the Croatians. Everybody was dissatisfied, in one way or another, with the situation. They were all fighting to get more. Most dissatisfied of all, of course, were the Muslims, who were hemmed into a very small area around Sarajevo, which was being bombarded daily by the Serbs. They were also fighting, in 1994 in particular, in the Herzegovina area, where they had a bloody conflict with the Croatians. This ultimately resulted in the destruction of the town of Mostar, which was, as you recall, one of the most beautiful towns, parts of it at least, in former Yugoslavia.

Q: *Absolutely.*

NILES: It was largely obliterated in the fighting between the Croatians and the Muslims. The Croatians blew up the bridge. But, I have to stress that nobody really seriously proposed military intervention in order to stop the fighting.

Q: *Were you thinking though, in terms, of saying, "Look, this thing is so bloody unfair. Let's allow the Muslims to get military equipment?"*

NILES: Well, that came later. There is absolutely no question in retrospect that the arms embargo that was imposed on all of the Yugoslav republics in November 1991, was a mistake. We should not have done that, because what it meant was that the Serbs, who did not need any arms, were given a big advantage. They had all the arms that had been accumulated over the years by Tito, and subsequent leaders of Yugoslavia, while w everybody else was left hanging out to dry. It was a big blunder, but at the time it seemed a logical move.

Q: *Was Senator Dole involved this early on, in April 1992?*

NILES: I don't recall Senator Dole being involved. Again, you have to remember, we had a Republican Administration that had voted in November 1991 in favor of the arms embargo. So, we didn't hear from Senator Dole. At that time, the idea of arming the Bosnians didn't really come into play. Now, there was an incident in May 1992 that was very interesting, particularly in light of future developments. Ralph Johnson and I were in the office one Saturday morning, laboring on Yugoslavia as you can imagine. I received a call from Ron Neitszke, who was, at that time, our Chargé d'Affaires in Zagreb. We had established the Embassy but an Ambassador had not yet been selected. Rom, who had been Consul General in Zagreb, stayed on as Charge. That day, Neitszke had an inquiry from the Croatian authorities, who told him that there was an Iranian Airlines 747 "full of arms and mujaheddin" destined for Bosnia at Zagreb Airport. The Croatians asked what they should do. We checked around, including with Deputy Secretary Eagleburger, and I got back to Ron with instructions to tell the Croatians to put the arms and the mujaheddin back in the plane and send the plane back to Tehran. We did not want arms coming into Yugoslavia. Ultimately, that is what happened. It took the better part of the day, and into the night in Zagreb to get this done. We were in the office until mid-afternoon on Saturday. By that time, it was 9:00 PM in Zagreb. The plane, presumably loaded up with the arms, although the Croatians may have ripped off most of it, but certainly with the mujaheddin took off and went back toward Tehran. That was the first indication that we had that the Iranians were beginning to try to get arms to the Bosnians, and we stopped it. Was that the right thing to do? I don't know. Subsequently, we turned a blind eye to this arms flow, as you know, during the Clinton administration, when the same thing was going on. The Croatians asked us the same questions. It is one of those issues that is almost in the "too hard file." You did not want the Iranians involved in Bosnia, but at the same time, we did not have an alternative such as our train and equip program yet for the Bosnians. Of course, our case came up in 1992. I think the case in the Clinton administration came up in 1993. The train and equip program didn't get underway until 1994. In any event, that is the way we did it. Whether we were right or wrong, history will tell. As far as I know, I may be wrong on this, the Iranians did not attempt further supply flights into Croatia, during my watch through April 1993. If they did, the Croatians didn't tell us about it and didn't call us. So, this totally unacceptable situation prevailed through the summer. We continued to work with our Allies to find ways to put pressure on Serbia to cease and desist. Milosevic was devious and deceptive. Ralph Johnson was in Belgrade in April or May 1992 and joined Warren Zimmerman for a long, inconclusive meeting with Milosevic. In June 1992, Warren was recalled.

Ralph Johnson was an important player in Yugoslav developments and you should interview him. In April 1992, Ralph went out in Belgrade and Sarajevo, and negotiated with then-Defense Minister Kadijevic the departure of the Yugoslav Army, the Serbian Army, from the Marshall Tito barracks in Sarajevo.

Q: *Were they just sitting there?*

NILES: They were sitting there, and were surrounded by a lightly armed force of Bosnians. There were women in the group, demonstrating against the Serbian troops. Kadijevic was

insistent that they be allowed to march out with their flags and all their weaponry. In the end, there was kind of a compromise. They were able to take most of their stuff, but not all of it. They left some, which they destroyed before the left, or tried to destroy in the barracks, and they left. Ralph was responsible for negotiating their departure. Ralph also had a several meetings in Belgrade, in April and May with Milosevic as part of our effort to get the message to Milosevic that his behavior in Bosnia was unacceptable and there were going to be serious consequences for him. Basically, Milosevic denied everything, as he always does. He would say that Karadzic was responsible and that he had never met Karadzic. He also denied knowing Mladic and Arkon. He was a total liar in every respect. Ralph spent one six-hour session with Milosevic during which Milosevic put him through the torture of not letting him get up to leave to go to the bathroom for six hours, drinking and eating. Of course, Milosevic didn't go to the bathroom, either. But, that was one of Milosevic's specific negotiating tactics. We had not yet imposed the economic sanctions, but even after we did that, we had no effective way to deliver a message to Milosevic, which can only be delivered, as we recently discovered in the case of Kosova, by an evident willingness to use military force in a big way. We should have said, "Stop the fighting in Bosnia by (fill in the date) or we are going to B-52s over Belgrade to deliver a heavy message." We were not prepared to do that, nor was anybody else prepared to do that. This was despite the fact that terrible atrocities were being committed in Bosnia.

Q: *From an observer's point of view, from reading the papers, it seemed that maybe this was true in other wars, but even more in this war, you might say the "shock troops" of getting information were a very aggressive, western press corps.*

NILES: Absolutely.

Q: *This was in a very dangerous time, but they were all over the place.*

NILES: The guy who wrote the book, *Blood and Vengeance*, was there. The guy, Joe, I can't think of his last name, wrote some excellent articles for *Newsday*, including the revelations about the Omarska prison camp. Also, the international relief people were good sources of information.

Q: *So, we had, in a way, an unofficial net that was supplying this information, which was, relative accurate. It was pretty horrible.*

NILES: The *Newsday* article, and this is a very personal aspect of it, was not totally accurate in using the term "death camp" to describe Omarska. But, people were dying, starving to death. It was terrible. We didn't have much in the way of diplomatic access to Bosnia. For, one, it was a very dangerous place to go. The Sarajevo Airport was frequently closed. This was the only way to get in, but as we discovered, tragically, in the case of Bob Frazier, Joe Kruzel, and Colonel Pace in August 1995, getting from the Sarajevo Airport to the city was neither safe nor easy. But at the early stages of the fighting, we had no way to verify the reports we received on what was happening on the ground. Overhead photography really didn't do it. But, the journalists and the NGO representatives were everywhere.

Q: *Regarding the journalists and the NGOs, you are sitting back, having to make judgments. Were you and your colleagues, CIA, and all, taking these things, absorbing what was coming in,*

trying to figure out whether this made sense. Were you feeling that what was going out to the public was a pretty accurate picture?

NILES: Yes. Ultimately, we agreed with general tenor of most of the press accounts, although there were extreme accounts that got it wrong. But basically, the journalists got it right. They reported accurately what was an extraordinary process of atrocities in Bosnia, particularly by the Serbs, but also by the Croatians, and to a degree, by the Bosnians. The Bosnians were so disorganized and pathetic in their resistance that at the early stages of the War they were not really capable of committing atrocities even if they wanted to. They didn't have the wherewithal to commit atrocities, although I am sure it occurred to them. I am also sure that subsequently they have repaid people when they had a chance, but in the beginning the Bosnians had no arms. They had no Army. They had nothing. It is quite extraordinary that in the space of about three years, they were able to put anything together at all. This applies to the Croatians, too.

Q: *Was the mood something like, "When this all shakes out, there is going to be a greater Croatia, a greater Serbia, and no Bosnia?"*

NILES: That is a good question, Stu. We knew from intelligent sources that Tudjman and Milosevic, throughout this period, were negotiating a partition of Bosnia. Croatia and Serbia were in a real struggle. Croatia was occupied up to about 30% by Serbian forces. The Serbs had fired FROG missiles onto Zagreb. It had been a really serious fight. Yet, throughout this, Tudjman and Milosevic were negotiating, secretly, about the partition of Bosnia. We knew that. Their plans were to basically carve it up, a la Polish partition. I don't know who was playing the role of Frederick the Great, and who was Maria Teresa, and who the Czar, there wasn't a third participant, but it was a Polish partition all over again. It was being done in secret by these two guys, who are totally unscrupulous and very similar. Our effort then and the Clinton administration continued this, was to try to preserve, in some way, a multinational Bosnian state. People told us we were crazy. I'm sure some people think today that we are crazy to insist that there is still a Bosnia. It is an entity of three specific and separate groups. That is all we recognize. Interestingly enough, I think there is a greater likelihood that that will, in some way, be the final outcome today than there was say two-three years ago, and certainly in 1992.

Q: *As an old Yugoslav hand, when this started to happen, I said that this was going to be a bigger Croatia, and a bigger Serbia, and there isn't going to be a Bosnia. What is this Bosnia thing? But now, I've been involved in two elections there, and I think, there very well may be a Bosnia.*

NILES: It is not out of the question. It is not to say that this is because we were geniuses or brilliant, or anything like that. We probably could be accused of mismanaging the whole thing, as we were. In any event, in the summer of 1992, the lines were pretty clearly drawn in Bosnia between the Serbs and everybody else. The lines between the Croatians and the Muslims were not. That struggle really began at the end of 1993 and lasted through most of 1994. A U.N. force, UNPROFOR was there, being pummeled by the Serbs and incapable of doing anything. There were Chapter VII economic sanctions against Serbia. There were pressures on us to do something without being very clear what that something was and a total resistance within the Administration to any consideration of using military force in Bosnia.

Q: *What I gather from news accounts at the time, that this particular force of Serbs seemed to be a bunch of bullies, more than many other military forces.*

NILES: Subsequently, we discovered that the Croatian and Bosnian Serbs were not a serious military force, but whenever we talked informally with colleagues from the Pentagon about military involvement in Yugoslavia, they would raise World War II and the legend that Tito's Partisans had held off 21 German divisions during the war. I always pointed out that the German forces in Bosnia never amounted to 21 divisions, and the forces stationed in Yugoslavia were never front line divisions. The front line divisions were out being chewed up on the Eastern Front, and then in Normandy. The Germans did not use front line divisions in Bosnia. They had, basically, cadre units down there, staffed by people such as Kurt Waldheim. No army that was serious would have used Kurt Waldheim as an officer in a responsible position. They also used Volksdeutsche units made up of Germans from the Vojvodina and Slavonia, that went around with the Ustashi terrorizing and burning villages. Every time they showed up, they created more partisans, because they were so vicious. Then, there were a few SS units also made up of Volksdeutsche, who created havoc and mayhem throughout Bosnia. Basically, that is what we were looking at here. We were not looking at anything really serious during the war. Of course, Tito, up in the mountains, was able to move around pretty well. The Germans had the cities while Tito basically controlled the mountains. But, there were a couple occasions, as Tito, himself admitted, when he was almost destroyed, even by that German force. There were some near escapes, down in the Neretva Valley on a couple of occasions. The lessons of World War II were not that any external military force sent into Bosnia was going to be destroyed by the locals. At least as far as I am concerned, that was not the lesson. But, that was the conclusion reached by the Pentagon, at least for the purposes of arguing why it was pointless for us to think about any kind of military involvement.

Now, the other point, and I heard General Powell make this point when the issue came up at an NSC meeting with the President, the only time I heard Bosnia discussed at that level. General Powell's point, when asked about military force in Bosnia, was that the United States could intervene, but before doing so had to know what we are going in for, against whom were we going in, and how we going to get out. There was some discussion of using air power against the Serbs, in part under the influence of the visuals from the Persian Gulf War, showing missiles going into the doors of buildings, and cruise missiles going down the streets of Baghdad and turning left at the second stop light. General Powell's point was, "You can punish from the air, but you create realities on the ground." I heard him say that, and he was right. We needed to reverse the Serbian victories in Bosnia, and to establish a new balance in Bosnia which would give us some hope for a peace settlement. In order for the Bosnians to feel reasonably satisfied with what they got out of it, the Serbs would be called to order, and basically knocked around quite a bit. To do that required ground forces. In 1992-94, the only ground forces available were U.S. There weren't any other ground forces. By 1995, there were other ground forces. There was a Croatian Army, and a Bosnian Army, which could put a heavy hit on the Serbs, and did. It created the realities on the ground so that when we went in with our bombing campaign in September-October 1995, the Serbs got the message pretty quickly. They were being beaten on the ground by the Croatians and by the Bosnians. They were being pummeled from the air by the NATO forces. They cried uncle.

Q: *What about Montenegro? Were we looking at this, at sometime, of dealing with it separately, or not, or did we feel that it was a tool...?*

NILES: At that time, Momir Bulatovic was the President of Montenegro, and he was hopeless. He was a client of Milosevic's. Bulatovic is now, I think, the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia. He was beaten as President of Montenegro in the last election by former Prime Minister Djuranovic. In any case, at that time, Montenegro was in the hands of Milosevic, through Bulatovic, who did whatever Milosevic wanted. The odd ball element, if you want to talk about odd things going on in Serbia, was the role of Milan Panic, an American citizen of Yugoslav descent, CEO of a pharmaceutical company, who out of nowhere became President of Yugoslavia. He was a strange guy in a strange period.

Q: *You might explain who he was.*

NILES: Milan Panic was a Yugoslav immigrant who came to the United States in the 1950s, and formed a company which ultimately became ICN Pharmaceuticals, a company that has had a lot of difficulties, but has made a lot of money. They are constantly in scrapes with the FDA, or some other regulatory agency. But Panic has made millions and millions of dollars. How many, I don't know, but he is a wealthy guy. He just settled a sexual harassment case, I noticed in the paper today, out at ICN Pharmaceuticals. By 1991, ICN had big investments in Yugoslavia. They owned the Galenika Pharmaceutical Company in the Belgrade area, and they also had an interest in the Pliva Pharmaceutical Company in Zagreb. Panic went back to Yugoslavia in 1991, and largely through a combination of his money and the help of Dobrica Cosic, who at that time was still a fairly prominent figure, politically and culturally, managed to be elected President of Yugoslavia. He was one of many oddball characters who appeared on the scene at that time, looking for ways to stop the fighting in Bosnia and to solve the problems in former Yugoslavia. Another odd ball who showed up was Prince Alexander of Yugoslavia, the Karageorgevic pretender, who lived in London. He came out of the woodwork and came to see us in Washington a couple times. He told us how he was going to solve the problems of Yugoslavia, and reestablish the Karageorgevic dynasty. We wished him well, and he went on his way. A sad case was the last Ambassador in Washington of Yugoslavia. He was a Bosnian Muslim from Foca named Muzeinovic, who worked diligently to find some way to save his country. He was a good guy. He died of cancer in early 1993 after receiving some very unorthodox cancer treatment from a Yugoslav-American doctor in South Carolina. I met with him quite a bit as Assistant Secretary, and talked about what we could do to try to stop the fighting. He was really a sad figure. Milan Panic flamed out after about a year and went back to California. He was like a comet, flashing across the heavens with a lot of panache and moving out quickly.

We did have one extraordinary meeting between Secretary Baker and Panic in Helsinki, at the time of the CSCE summit in July 1991. Panic, of course, wanted to see President Bush. I told Secretary Baker, who agreed, that we should never let Panic in with the President. God knows what he would have done, but I told Secretary Baker that I thought he should see Panic, which he did. The Secretary started off the meeting with Panic by saying, "The behavior of Serbia and Montenegro in Bosnia is totally unacceptable and we must end the fighting in Bosnia." Panic was sitting about 10 feet away from Baker, with a low table in between. At this moment, Panic

leapt out of his chair, jumped over the table, grabbed a startled Secretary Baker by the shoulders and said, "I agree with you." I thought he was going to attack the Secretary. Secretary Baker was a pretty cool guy, but even he was taken aback. It was fortunate that there were no DS agents in the room as they probably would have shot Panic.

Q: *DS agents being Department of State bodyguards?*

NILES: Yes. If they had been in the room, they probably would have shot him. I thought, "What is this guy doing?" Here, he was grabbing Baker to agree with him. I have to say that Panic' instincts were right. He wanted to stop the fighting, establish peace, and sell pharmaceuticals. Basically, that was his angle. He had no influence over Milosevic. Milosevic thought Panic was a dope.

Q: *Okay, so what about the role of the Russians and the Greeks in these orthodox waters?*

NILES: Well, they were involved. The Russians were not quite as big a pain in the neck in 1992, when I was in EUR, as they became subsequently when we actually decided to use military force to implement the Dayton Agreement. We weren't really putting any proposals forward that the Russians could thwart. They went along with Chapter VII sanctions on Serbia in June 1992. I was a little surprised that they did. That was an era of good feelings between Russia and the United States. The Russian Ambassador to the UN abstained on the sanctions resolutions, but they didn't veto it. Yeltsin visited Washington that same month, and clearly the Russians did not want to have a big dispute with us over Yugoslavia at that time. Russia has from the very beginning of the crisis claimed to have more influence in Serbia than it did. I don't think the Serbs paid any attention to the Russians. The Russians would say, "Please behave reasonably." The Serbs replied, "Oh, we are already, don't worry." The Russians said, "Oh, good." The Russian/Serbian dialogue was not very deep, but they constantly told us that this was an area of traditional Russian interest.

Q: *When the Soviet Army came through part of Yugoslavia, it left such ill will that...*

NILES: They went through the Banat and the Vojvodina, primarily, on their way to Budapest un Marshal Tolbukhin. They burned, raped and pillaged as if it were enemy territory. I didn't think that there was much to the Russian role in Yugoslavia, and I don't think there is today. They can be difficult in that they can veto UNSC resolutions. You have to play along with them because of the Security Council's structure; they can still cause trouble there. Otherwise, I just don't think there is much significance in the Russian role. The Greeks, on the other hand, made several serious efforts to use their Orthodox ties with Milosevic to promote a negotiated solution. Nothing ever came of it. But Greek governments from 1992 on, irrespective of party, felt that they had a role to play in talking with the Serbs and keeping the lines open, and they did.

Q: *So, from your perspective, they were a moderate positive force?*

NILES: Well, they didn't do anything. What could they do? They were basically a nuisance, more than anything else, because they claimed to be able to do things that they couldn't do. In the NATO discussions, they were always trying to moderate hostility toward Serbia. Their

feeling was that the "Serbs were not all that bad, and the others are equally bad." It was true that everybody, particularly the Croatian government had no particular virtue, but they were not as bad, at least in my view, and everybody else's view, as responsible, as culpable as was the government of Serbia and Milosevic, personally.

Q: *Did you notice a change...?*

NILES: The person who I think did work in a more responsible way, on the Greek side, than anyone else was former Prime Minister (1989-93) Constantine Mitsotakis, who went to Belgrade several time while he was Prime Minister. Then, after he left office, he was always trying to persuade Milosevic to cease and desist in Bosnia, because Mitsotakis was under no illusions about Serbian behavior. Some of the others had too rosy a view, but I don't think Mitsotakis had a rosy view. He knew that Milosevic was a criminal.

Q: *The election of November 1992 prepared the way for the Clinton administration. Let's continue in Yugoslavia, and then, we will go back. Did you brief the Clinton administration? Can you talk a little about the transition and getting them ready?*

NILES: We briefed the transition team. The new NSC officer responsible for Europe, Jenone Walker, came around and talked to me. Strobe Talbott also spent some time in the Bureau, although Talbot didn't talk about Bosnia, he talked about the former Soviet Union. And finally, I had one session with Sandy Burger, whom I had known when he was in S/P during the Carter Administration and worked with when he was at Hogan and Hartson up to January 20, 1993. Then, of course, Secretary Christopher and his team came on board. Steve Oxman was designated as my successor, but he was not confirmed until April 1, 1993, so I remained on duty until then. There was a new team upstairs, and the principal contact for me was Peter Tarnoff, whom I knew well from his time as a Foreign Service Office. We spent a lot of time with Peter on Bosnia, and there were several long sessions with Secretary Christopher himself. Deputy Secretary Warton was no involved at all. Madeleine Albright, who had already been confirmed as Permanent Representative to the UN, participated in these discussions and had lots of ideas, mainly bad ones.

I had known Secretary Christopher fairly well when he was Deputy Secretary, and then when I was Ambassador to the European Community, then senior managing partner of O'Melveny & Myers, Warren Christopher, came through Brussels on O'Melveny & Myers business. They had a Brussels office. I had him and his local representatives to dinner with people from the European Commission. But when the new team came in, everybody else who had worked on Yugoslavia was gone. Eagleburger, Arnie Kanter, Frank Wisner (who had moved to OSD), and all the others were gone, and I was the only person left. So I was the person who had to bring the bad news on Yugoslavia to Secretary Christopher, who immediately saw that it was a mess and hated the issue. He once referred to Yugoslavia, or Bosnia, as "the issue from hell." He hated it. Every time you came into the office to talk with him about it, you could see from his body language that he felt as though he were getting a root canal or two. I don't think it helped my standing with the Secretary that I was the messenger on Bosnia. We told him, we explained to him what we had done, what we hadn't done. We explained the Kosovo warning. I briefed him on the military attitudes. Somewhere in my papers, I have a memo that I sent to him in January

or February. I tried to explain to him the attitudes of the military toward the Yugoslav crisis. It was a page and a half memo. I told him that he would find that the JCS position would not change with the change in Administrations. OSD could change, but the uniformed services' position would be the same. I noted that he would face the same cast of characters: General Powell, Admiral Jeremiah, General McCaffrey, General McPeak, General Ryan and others. I told him that when they think about Bosnia, the first thing they think about is Vietnam and that he had to be ready for that. I pointed out that the military saw Bosnia as having very important parallels with Southeast Asia, where we go might bomb Bosnia, or have troops in Bosnia, but the real enemy is Serbia. They are across the border, playing the North Vietnamese role in a sanctuary. I told him that the military would insist that if we go in, we go in massively, or not at all. Christopher subsequently, in a meeting I attended with him, referred those points, without saying where the information came from. He used pieces of my memo to discuss the issues of US military involvement in. So, he obviously read it. I was at one remarkable meeting between Secretary Christopher and General McCaffrey, who replaced Ed Leland. Secretary Christopher asked General McCaffrey, after he had presented a briefing on the military situation, what force would be required in order to "bring peace and order to Bosnia" General McCaffrey was silent for a moment and then replied "Well, Mr. Secretary, in my military judgment, I think that would require a field Army." Secretary Christopher said to General McCaffrey, "Well, what is a field Army, General?" General McCaffrey said, "Well, it is about 400,000 troops." You could see the color totally drain out of the Secretary's face, when told, basically, that we were going to involve ourselves in Bosnia, militarily, the Pentagon would argue for sending 400,000 troops. That was equivalent to saying we were not going to do it. This, of course, was the Pentagon position. That was General Powell's position, "You can punish from the air, but you establish realities on the ground. If you are going to go in, go in on the ground and do it right, but go in big time, with 400,000." Christopher, obviously, wasn't going to recommend that to the President, and certainly, Clinton would do it in any case. Another session which was interesting was on a Saturday afternoon at the end of February. I remember it very clearly, because what ensued. We went up to Christopher's office about 3:00. We had been working all day on a paper on Bosnian options. With the Secretary, we discussed these options, none of which were promising. That was the reality of it. The participants in this meeting were Madeleine Albright, Steve Oxman, who was my designated successor but not yet confirmed, Ralph Johnson, Lionel Johnson and one or two others from Christopher's staff, and I. We kicked all around these hopeless options. Secretary Christopher was polite, as always, but dissatisfied. At one point, Madeleine Albright said, "Well, Chris, one of the things we have to do is to get moving on the issue of war criminals. The problem is the State Department just isn't doing anything on war criminals." I took that, maybe incorrectly, to be a direct attack on me. In fact, we were the only ones who were compiling all this information on war crimes, from our sources in Bosnia by then, because we had a diplomatic office in Sarajevo, and elsewhere in Yugoslavia. Another source was from refugees. We were shipping all this stuff via IO to the UN. I said, "Madeleine, that is just not true. We are the only ones doing anything on war crimes, we and the Dutch." That was true. The only other country that was involved, at that time, in getting information on Bosnian war crimes was the Netherlands. I cannot remember why except the Dutch are always very concerned about these things, and want to do good around the world, and are concerned about war crimes. So, they were sending up information, too. But, literally, we were the only two, as far as I am aware. Madeleine Albright didn't take that very well. Perhaps, it was not a very judicious way to put things to the future Secretary of State, but it was late in the day on Saturday, and I was in this

hopelessly bad meeting, and then to be told, incorrectly, that we were not doing anything on war crimes, was too much. Anyway, Secretary Christopher, as I said, hated the issue and tried to the end of his time in the Department to avoid it. Nobody liked the issue.

When I left, on April 1, 1993, Steve Oxman took over. Ralph Johnson also left, and Oxman's team was left with Bosnia. They came up with a nutty proposal which they called "Lift and Strike," which meant lift the arms embargo on Bosnia, or at least, ignore it, and send arms to the Bosnians and if the Serbs used that opportunity, or took that as a provocation and intensified their attacks on the Bosnians, we would strike the Serbs from the air. So, "Lift and Strike," lift the arms embargo on Bosnia and strike if the Serbs react. Of course, everybody figured if the Serbs saw us arming the Bosnians, they would have this window of opportunity when they could destroy this Bosnian Army. Before it became a powerful force, they were likely to attack, and then we would have to strike. This was developed in April after I left. Secretary Christopher made a trip to Europe in early May 1993 to brief the Allies on our plan. The Allies looked at this and decided that it was crazy. They told us that if the United States adopted this policy, we should give them a little notice so that they could withdraw their troops which where there with UNPROFOR. This involved the British, French, Spanish, and Dutch, all of whom had troops in Bosnia. The Administration, confronted with this universal raspberry from the Europeans, dropped "Lift and Strike," and basically came back to where we had been all along, doing nothing. By the summer of 1993, the Clinton Administration was pretty well set on doing nothing. They were agonizing over Bosnia, but not doing anything about it. This was when two members of the EEY staff defected in disgusted. They felt the Clinton Administration was no better than we had been. In a sense, they were right, but the truth was that the Clinton Administration was worse because they had talked such a good game.

Q: *Did you see anything developing, during this time, in the way of trying to put together something, a policy or a force or anything?*

NILES: You mean a European force?

Q: *A European force.*

NILES: Of course not.

Q: *Well, I'm asking the question...*

NILES: Well, it is a serious question. It is not a joke, because the Europeans did say that they would handle it. The Europeans were involved. Give them their due. They made sacrifices. They put their forces in there.

Q: *They were taking casualties.*

NILES: They were taking fairly heavy hits. They were losing people, on an almost daily basis. By the time it was all done, UNPROFOR probably cost the British, French, Spanish, and Dutch maybe 200 lives. It wasn't that they didn't make a sacrifice. But beyond participating in this hopeless U.N. force, they had no mechanism or capability to mount a military operation in

Bosnia. At the end of the day, the only way it could be done was through the command, control, communications, intelligence and transportation capabilities of NATO, which meant the United States. In terms of getting people in there, the only way you could get people quickly into Bosnia, if you did it overland, was to move them from Germany, as we did, in January 1996. The First Armored Division came down and went across the Sava River and said, "Hey, the first team is on the ground." People said, "Uh oh, these guys are serious. They have 425 M1A2 tanks and they are going to kick our asses if we mess with them." The reality was, unless you had the United States Army, on the ground, ready to clean clocks if people got out of line, and the United States Air Force patrolling the air, and maybe a carrier task force in the Adriatic, there wasn't any force that could come in. Added all together, the Europeans had sufficient military forces, but they did not have the mechanisms to organize and deploy a force. They had no military structure, no way of doing it. They still don't. There is a hypothetical possibility under this new arrangement in NATO that the Europeans could organize a Combined Joint Task Force with NATO support, but without the United States troops. It hasn't been tried yet, and it certainly won't be tried in a situation as serious as what prevailed in Bosnia in 1995. But again, if we are realistic and serious about what happened in Bosnia and how we got to Dayton, the truth is that the way we got to Dayton was through the Croatian Army.

Q: *Well, were we doing anything...*

NILES: We helped them.

Q: *I was going to say, let's talk about the Croatian Army.*

NILES: The Croatian Army was built up from the fall of 1991 through the spring of 1995. I don't think we know the whole story and how they got their weapons and training has not been revealed. But, they got a lot of weapons. They got weapons from Belarus and Ukraine, not from Russia. They got weapons from Poland and from Czech Republic. They got a hodgepodge of weapons. They got weapons, ex-Soviet weapons, ex-GDR weapons, from the Federal Republic of Germany. The Germans gave the Croatians large quantities of ex-Soviet tanks and helicopters, and so forth, that the Germans got from the GDR at the time of German unification. We did more than turn a blind eye to all that was going on, although we did that, too. I suspect that we organized the shipments and the funding, from the CIA and other sources such as the Saudis and the Gulf Emirates who wanted to help the Bosnian Muslims. Some of this was public. We had a public stated policy, from 1994 on, to arm the Bosnians. We weren't the only ones. The Turks helped, the Saudis and Kuwaitis gave money, other Arab countries sent equipment. The Iranians sent equipment, too, and we looked the other way.

Q: *You keep saying, "I would not be at all surprised..." You were Assistant Secretary of European...*

NILES: No, this was after I left.

Q: *Oh, okay.*

NILES: I beg your pardon. In 1992, the process of arming Croatia really hadn't gotten rolling.

This is something that got going in 1993 and 1994, after I was gone. But, again, there were some arms going into Croatia, but not very much, during our time. We did stop one effort by the Iranians to send arms to the Bosnians. Another thing to keep in mind is that all of the arms that went to the Bosnians, through Croatia, whether through Split or Zagreb, the Croatians took a tax in the form of arms. I don't know whether it was a quarter, a third, or a tenth, or what, but they took their part. By May of 1995, the Croatian Army was a fighting force of considerable proportion. They ran through the Serbs in Western Slavonia like a knife through hot butter. They drove them out, took that place in a day and a half, or something like that, kicked the Serbs who lived in Western Slavonia, across the Sava River into Bosnia. They sent a very clear message that there was a new sheriff in town, and his name was Tudjman. He was going to take some names and clean things up. Then, in August, they struck again with Operation Storm, first in the Krajina region and then in Eastern Slavonia. They rolled the Krajina Serbs out of there, blew up Knin, and captured the air base in the northern part of the Krajina region. I can't think of the name of it. They captured all the airplanes, and headed out across Bosnia. They joined up with the Bosnian Army in northern Bosnia. They were on their way to Banja Luka. Now, it is interesting, if the cease fire hadn't been called there, whether the combined Croatian/Bosnian force in northern Bosnia, would have been able to roll all the way across northern Bosnia and take Banja Luka. That would have created an even worse refugee problem. As it was, you had 250,000- 300,000 Serbian refugees headed east, into Serbia. That Croatian offensive, aided and abetted, ultimately, by our air bombardment of the Bosnian Serbs, was what lead us to Dayton. As I said before, General Powell was right when he said that we were not going to reverse the situation in Bosnia without ground troops. In 1992, 1993, 1994, you talk ground troops, you talk American troops. They are the only ones who could have done it. But, by 1995, you had a new force. It was called the Croatian Army, with help from the Bosnian Army.

Q: *We have talked about the Macedonian problem but what about the efforts in Bosnia? Did that act at all on you?*

NILES: We were able to secure Greek participation in the NATO force sent to Bosnia following Dayton. They are still there with a supply battalion. Why did the Greeks do this? They realized that participation in the NATO military effort gave them a voice at the political table. They also contributed to "Sharp Guard" in the Adriatic. Another reason why they joined these efforts was because the Turks were there. The Greeks felt that if the Turks were coming back to Bosnia, then they were going to be there, too. We encouraged the Greeks to participate. We also encouraged them to become more involved with the programs in Albania, Romania and Bulgaria. We didn't have to push hard because they saw that these partnerships were good ones. They saw that being involved was good for them. The Turkish angle wasn't absent there either. The Turks were also involved in these projects and they wanted to be there to balance the Turks and watch the Turks. Our military people worked closely with the Greeks and they were satisfied with the way the Greeks performed. The Greeks also had military training missions in most of the southeastern European countries. They had to withdraw their military training mission from Albania in 1996, as there was no one left to train, although they kept their Consulate in southern Albania.

Q: *There were too many people wandering around with guns.*

NILES: Everybody in Albania seemed to have an AK 47 and they were using them. Of course,

some of those weapons ended up in Greece, in some cases as far away as Samos and Crete. That was a disaster. Greek policy in southeastern Europe, once we got over the embargo on Macedonia and the problems I mentioned between Greece and Albania in the summer and fall of 1995, was farsighted and constructive. They saw their interests served by promoting democracy and economic development and were prepared to put resources behind it. We worked with them closely. Dick Shifter found that the Greeks were prepared to support his Southeastern Europe Cooperative Initiative (SECI).

Q: Were there any consular problems?

NILES: The only consular cases in which I became involved were the child custody cases. I remember two in particular in which I became actively engaged, one on Crete and one in Thessaloniki. Both were difficult cases and took up an enormous amount of time of the Consular officers involved, the DCM and me. On Crete the case involved a kidnapping of two young girls by their Greek father who lived in New Hampshire, I believe. The father brought them back to Crete. The courts in the United States said the children must be returned to the mother. The Greek government and courts said the same but the children stayed in Crete. I raised the case with the Foreign Minister, and finally with the Prime Minister. They looked into it and agreed that the children should be returned. But in the male-dominated, tightly-knit Cretan society, we were unable to secure the implementation of all of these court orders. When I left the girls were still there. There were charges of sexual abuse, but I don't know if they were true. This case had Congressional interest as well. Tom Lantos from California had a son-in-law who was a Congressman from New Hampshire. His name was Dick Svec. He ran for the Senate in 1996 against Senator Smith and lost. He was the Congressman involved and since he was married to Tom Lantos' daughter, Lantos was also involved. We did all we could. You can't go much higher than talk to the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and the Minister of Justice. We simply could not find a local official on Crete who would execute the court orders. The police officials in Athens were not able to force their colleagues on Crete to act.

The case in Thessaloniki was similar. Two children, in this case from Alaska, had been taken back to Greece against all court orders by the Greek husband. In Thessaloniki, the American citizen mother had the children but she couldn't leave the country. She tried on one occasion but was stopped. We helped her make her way out of Greece, bending, if not breaking, the law. The husband was outraged and blamed us. This happened in the summer of 1997 just before I left. The husband was talking about suing the Embassy. Good luck.

These are terribly difficult cases. Rarely is all the truth and justice on one side. The children are the pawns. The parent who kidnaps the children is breaking the law and should be punished, but often these cases are very complicated.

THOMAS P. H. DUNLOP
Political/Consular Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1963-1965)

Consular Officer
Zagreb, Yugoslavia (1969-1972)

Political Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1978-1982)

Thomas P. H, Dunlop was born in 1934 in Washington DC. He completed his undergraduate degree at Yale University in 1956. He attended the University of Berlin after graduation as a Fulbright scholar. After Germany, Mr. Dunlop served a brief stint with the US Air Force before joining the Foreign Service in 1960. He has served in Yugoslavia, Vietnam, and Korea during his career with the State Department. He was interviewed in 1996 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: I was going to ask about that. I remember that we took a very interesting trip to an area which is now the "hot spot" of the world, that is, Bosnia, including all of the places which have become names known for horrors of one sort or another during the recent conflict in Yugoslavia. Could you talk a bit about your impressions of traveling around Yugoslavia, how you did it and what you were getting out of it?

DUNLOP: One of the things that the Embassy did very well was to recognize the benefit of official travel by Embassy officers. Since some of us were under-employed, this was a very good way to spend some time. Even if we had been fully employed, it still would have been a good way to spend some of our time. Sometimes in Embassies it's hard to find time to get out of the capital city. I'm sure that the Consular Section never found itself looking for extra work. In the case of the Political Section, our officers were always encouraged to travel. Most of them did so because they were not only encouraged to travel but they liked doing it.

We traveled in pairs, which was a good idea for lots of reasons, one of which was the very mundane reason that it's very dangerous to drive around that country. It's always safer to have two people in a car than one. There was also the security aspect. The Yugoslavs kept Embassy personnel under fairly tight surveillance. Sometimes this surveillance was aggressive, although most times it was not. Having two Embassy officers traveling together was always a good idea under those circumstances. The security police might want to stage a provocation. That is, they might want to allege that something happened when it hadn't or try to make something happen which would not ordinarily have happened. The object might be to put an Embassy officer in a compromising situation and embarrass the Embassy publicly. Or the object might be to put pressure on the individual officer concerned or attempt to blackmail him. In such a case having two officers traveling together was always better than having one officer traveling alone. So we would travel paired up. Sometimes Consular Officers like you and I would travel together. Sometimes it would be an Economic Officer like Ed Siegal and I who would travel together. Sometimes it would be another Political Officer who would travel with me. However, the idea was to take about 7-10 days and work out an itinerary through a very interesting part of the country. In the case of the trip to Bosnia which you and I took, it involved going to Bosnia and Croatia and then returning to Belgrade, I guess. We went to Slurj, I believe. I remember that we were there on the evening of All Saints Day [November 1]. We saw people going to the cemeteries on All Saints Day.

DUNLOP: Yes, I did, although all of us who knew Yugoslavia are horrified at what has recently happened to the country. I don't think that this is hard to understand. We can get into this later on, no doubt, but I don't think that the horrors in Bosnia were inevitable.

Q: We're talking about Yugoslavia during the 1990's.

DUNLOP: Yes. However, I think that we believed that these horrors were possible. I think that Popovic and Jankovic, our two Serbian teachers at the FSI, left with us a strong view of Serbian nationalism, a feeling that the Serbs had never been able to get anything easily. I remember one of the words that Jankovic used. Perhaps Popovic would have used it, too. Jankovic would say, "You know, no matter what else you can say about the Balkans, under the Turks we all suffered. Under the Austrians and the Magyars, and under the Hungarians in particular, the Croatians certainly had their problems. But it was Serbia that took the lead. The Serbs created the Yugoslav state." They would say that the other ethnic groups didn't do that. So they would conclude that, "We Serbs deserve credit for that. But we've never gotten credit for it." That's what the Serbs feel. I think that when I was in Yugoslavia, I was aware of that feeling. Certainly, when I later came back to serve in Zagreb [in Croatia], I saw the opposite side of that coin. I remember being appalled at the Serbian contempt for the Albanians, the "shiptars" (name for Albanians, pejorative when used by Serbs) . The Kosovo "shiptars" came to Belgrade to clean the streets, and so forth. Then I would talk to our Albanian acquaintances in the club, whom I met.

Q: "Smiley" and "Happy."

DUNLOP: Yeah, the two brothers who made awfully good drinks down in the bar. After a while I was Treasurer of the club, so I actually wrote out their paychecks. I remember that this gave me more time to talk to "Smiley," who was the older one. He once told me, "You know, Mr. Dunlop, there are only two places in Yugoslavia where I feel comfortable. One is in my home in Pec, in Kosovo, and the other one is right here in this club. I can't walk out this door and not feel that people hate me." He was absolutely right about that. The Serbs both hated and loathed the Albanians. That contempt, plus hatred, is a poisonous mix. That leads to genocide. That's terrible stuff.

Q: Let's move into 1980 and Tito's slowly, laboriously, and painfully passing from the scene. Could you discuss that?

DUNLOP: I think that Tito was variously believed to be 84 or 85 as the new year of 1980 approached. He held the annual Diplomatic Hunt, which was one of his last such public events, if not the last in late autumn 1979. His practice at Christmas and New Year's had always been to stage a kind of "state procession," like Queen Victoria or Queen Elizabeth, visiting one of the major areas of the United Kingdom. Tito would visit one of the [seven constituent] republics of Yugoslavia, hold forth there, and give a New Year's Eve party, which would be afforded extensive, televised coverage. He could be seen as the benign, smiling, "playful" leader that he sometimes probably was.

In 1980 I believe that he was going to do that in Slovenia at Christmas time. He went to Slovenia, but events didn't take place quite that way. Just at that time rumors began to spread that he was ill, and that's why there hadn't been a lot of television coverage of gala parties and receptions, toasts, speeches of thanks, and so forth. In fact, he had fallen seriously ill. Apparently, he had periodically had a kind of thrombotic condition in his lower left leg. This had been adequately treated in various ways, using blood thinners and whatever else is usually done. However, this time this condition came on him again and put him to bed. The authorities tried to hide this condition. They put him in the clinic at Ljubljana, probably the best medical facility in the country, where he eventually died.

About two weeks after he was hospitalized, they finally announced that he was ill. Within a relatively short time the pronouncements on his illness and the events surrounding them indicated that this was a life threatening condition. I guess that the Yugoslav authorities did what they might have been expected to do. They made a big show of calling in medical experts from all over the world. They got Doctor DeBakey from Dallas, TX. DeBakey was then prominently known in Europe because of heart transplants. They got a comparably famous or internationally well-known Soviet physician in. They got Swiss and French doctors. The regional medical officer whom we had on our staff in the Embassy in Belgrade had a lot of contacts among the Belgrade medical community. He was able to keep us pretty well abreast of the situation, or at least of the informed gossip about it. The doctors weren't being told any more than the public was, but they had a better way of judging what a medical communique really meant. I remember the doctor saying at the Embassy staff meeting, when he gave us the latest "poop" about Tito's condition, that it was a real error that the Yugoslav Government had made when they decided to treat Tito by committee. He said that this was inviting the worst. He said that Tito would be much better off if he would just check himself into a US Clinic under the name of "Joe Broz" and say, "Here I am. Please treat me." He could leave it to them to decide what doctor would be in charge of his treatment.

However, of course, they didn't do this. They had this process going on where a medical board would meet and issue official communiques. This went on for six months, during which time part of his leg was amputated. That may have prolonged his life a little bit. He died in May or June, 1980. His birthday was always celebrated on May 25. I'm not sure whether he died just before or just after his birthday.

His funeral was a major event. The decision always has to be made as to who will represent a given government at the funeral of a chief of state. I'm sure that we can all remember President Charles De Gaulle, walking with great dignity behind the caisson carrying President John F. Kennedy's body. As Tito was a chief of state for 50 years, during which he carved out for himself a place in history, a lot of countries sent their chiefs of state. The Germans sent Helmut Schmidt, who was Federal Chancellor at that time. Other countries sent people of lesser rank. We sent President Jimmy Carter's mother, Lillian Carter, and Vice President Walter Mondale. There was some consternation over that. I'm sure that "Ms Lillian" was a grand lady. She had been in the Peace Corps in India. However, there was some consternation over that. I think that it was more of a tempest in a teapot than anything else.

Among other things, within three weeks of Tito's funeral we were able to announce a state visit to the new, Yugoslav Government by President Carter which had sort of been under consideration for some time. It would take place later in 1980. That was helpful.

Tito's funeral was a very impressive event. There was a lot of real public shock and some real sorrow. I always felt that the foreign, and particularly the American, press exaggerated the sorrow part. I always thought that Americans in general exaggerated the degree to which Tito had won the "affection" of his people. He had certainly won their respect and their fear. Certainly, there was a mixture of emotions in the feelings of ordinary Yugoslavs for him. Huge crowds attended the public ceremonies. The funeral was held in Belgrade. If I can say this without sounding too foolish, the Serbs respect death and visibly show their respect for death. Death is an important event. It is not something that you kind of avoid talking about until it happens. Then, when it happens, you don't talk about it for very long. In Serbia death is a "big deal." I guess that I am not expressing this very well, but the crowds that turned out were respecting death, as well as Tito, the individual who had died.

One of the more important questions about the funeral was what role would Mrs. Tito play. Mrs. Tito was still Mrs. Tito but had been in internal political exile...

Q: This was Jovanka...

DUNLOP: Jovanka Broz. The lady who had been Tito's wife of record for many years, since shortly after World War II. In fact, she had fallen out of favor for reasons that were obscure and remained obscure. I think that we have already discussed that a little bit. She may have allowed herself to get too closely involved in some of the discussions regarding the fate of Yugoslavia after Tito's death with people from her part of Yugoslavia, Lika. This is a Croatian-Serbian area known as the Krajina [in western Bosnia], where Lika Serbs live. She came to the funeral, acted with great dignity, and was allowed to place a wreath on his coffin.

After he was buried, his tomb was quickly turned into a pilgrimage site for visitors. Every schoolchild, certainly in Belgrade and in many other cities over the intervening years, was bussed up there to walk around his tomb. We were all kind of interested in how well that would be done. People's tastes in these things vary. However, the tomb isn't too garish. His remains lie in a room filled with flowers. People come into the room at one end and walk a half circle around his remains and go out the other end. There is a very handsome, marble slab there with a simple inscription. Such visits were still going on when I left Yugoslavia in 1982. I am told that the tomb has now been closed. People are not now being bussed and trucked up to visit his tomb.

Q: By this time Tito was dead. You were reporting and looking at things from this perspective. You didn't mention Bosnia Herzegovina, which later became the "cockpit" of everything. Was Bosnia of particular concern at that time or was your attention pretty much focused on the other areas?

DUNLOP: One of the things I believed, and which doesn't necessarily seem to be everybody's belief who has a hand in Yugoslav affairs here in Washington, is that Bosnia doesn't exist as a separate Bosnia entity. What goes on in Bosnia is a function of what goes on in Croatia and

Serbia. The Muslim community in Bosnia does, of course, exist, has a right to and should be able to express its own political will and desires through some form of really representative government, with full, civil safeguards. However, there never has been a Bosnian state since at least the 11th or 12th century. Bosnia had no national identity as such throughout the long years of Turkish occupation, and it's my view it does not today.

The Croatians and the Serbs in Bosnia had preserved their respective national identities. When it comes to "push and shove," as it frequently does in Bosnia, it's a matter of Croatians shoving Serbs, or vice versa, and the Muslims sort of get in the way. That may sound very dismissive of what a lot of Americans may think of these days as the "noble" and deserving, Muslim population of Sarajevo and the surrounding areas. The Bosnian Muslims have a government and should be allowed to run that country as the government, is the prevailing view.

I think that people dealing with Yugoslavia during the early 1980's, trying to project their views into the future, if they had anticipated the dissolution of Yugoslavia, and I think that they might well have done so, or if they wanted to project a scenario including the dissolution of Yugoslavia, never would have said that there will emerge an independent, Bosnian state. They would always have seen Bosnia as being carved up between Serbia and Croatia. They probably would have guessed that, given their wishes, the Muslims would choose to go with a Croatian side. With good leadership the Croatians could make that a tolerable choice for the Muslims in Bosnia. I still think that this could have happened, and I emphasize the word "could."

It seems to me that it was never likely that, of their own free will, the Muslims would opt for inclusion in a Serbian state. There are historic reasons for this, but they stretch right into the 20th century, and they are even stronger now. The friction between Muslim and Serb has always been greater than between Muslim and Croat.

Q: During World War II the Muslims and the Croats sort of ganged up on the Serbs.

DUNLOP: That's right. And the Germans were able to recruit a very substantial number of Muslims into what they called the "SS Hundjar Division", which had just about the same record of treating civilian populations as every other armed unit that marched through Bosnia. "Hundjar" is the Turkish word for the curved scimitar the Turks used to have. So the translation into English of the "Hundjar Division" is the "Scimitar Division." Their shoulder patch, which I've seen, is green (the Muslim color), with a silver scimitar, dripping with blood! [Laughter]

HARRY A. CAHILL
Economic Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1965-1968)

Harry A. Cahill was born in New York, New York and raised in New England. He received a bachelor's degree in English from Manhattan College and served in the U.S. Army. His Foreign Service career included positions in India, Norway, Poland, Yugoslavia, Uruguay, Colombia, and Bombay. Mr. Cahill was

interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 29, 1993.

Q: Bar is in Montenegro...

CAHILL: On the southern coast next to Albania. Further north up the coast is Ploce where we recommended building a port with the AID funds. Today it is the main seaport for the new state of Bosnia, vital in the war.

Q: We are talking about the present war between the Serbs and the Bosnians and Croats.

CAHILL: Yes, conflict on vicious terrain. In winter snow or summer heat I would pass through Yugoslavia's rugged hills and mountain passes on the way to check assistance programs, another new dam, emergency food deliveries after an earthquake, CARE feeding units, steel mills. Every bend in the road was a perfect ambush site. The Yugoslav army trained for small unit operations of this type.

Q: In the embassy there was always a good sense of morale. It was the best place that I have served for spirit and the caliber of the officers.

CAHILL: Yugoslavia was a world within itself. Full of contrasts and natural riches and potential. We had great hope for the future in the econ section. A solid base would be built by 1970. CEOs and academicians flowed in to ask us about worker-ownership of factories and future investment. But the gilded tomorrow never came. The death of Tito and his strong unifying hand hurt deeply. Another key element was the failure of the financial system. It did not work on economic principles but on cronyism and political greed. It dished out credits to terrible projects and shady operators, to friends and ethnic comrades. Childish leaders ran amuck with the nation's wealth. Politics became thuggery. Break up the nation and alienate communities for short-term political gain. I saw the same disease in Nigeria, Sri Lanka and India.

Q: What was your impression of Tito and his rule at that time?

CAHILL: Tito was a very strong man. No one knew who would succeed him. He went on, and on, and on and on. He was the unifier.

Q: Tito was considered at that point a good thing?

CAHILL: A stable thing, a good thing, a man who held the country together. He believed he was Mr. Yugoslavia, the man who had the best interests of Yugoslavia at heart. He dwarfed everybody else. He was the banyan tree in whose shade no other trees grew.

Q: Because we are speaking from the perspective of 1993 and this horrible falling apart of Yugoslavia, what was your feeling and maybe of your colleagues, about the ethnic divisiveness at that time?

CAHILL: We thought, I suspect just about everyone in the mission thought, that ethnic divisiveness was in check, even fading. The evidence said so. I probably traveled as much if not

more than any embassy person and I would constantly find people saying "we Yugoslavs." There was pride in this. They were Macedonians or Croats or Serbs first but they were also Yugoslavs and saw personal gain by being so. Government moved its officers around. Big companies moved managers around. Slovenians headed factories in the south. The army was totally integrated. I did not hear calls for the end of the union or serious backbiting about other ethnic groups.

Q: And it wasn't as though people were living in absolute terror of the secret police. You couldn't say these things in public, but at the same time we had very frank discussions at that time.

CAHILL: There was no strong, palpable fear. The official theme "Oneness in Brotherhood" seemed accepted. Our view was that it was national suicide to break apart. Most people would lose, not win in any sense. We thought that most of the population thought as we did.

Q: This may be one of our problems. As a practical people it is hard to envision the passions of nationality.

CAHILL: Well said. I suspect that incitement of passions to rip a nation apart largely came at first from outside. From political thinkers in Central Europe and overseas clubs of ethnic groups who cannot get hurt themselves but can cheer on the warriors from the safety of a distant armchair. The money and the hate words are pumped "home".

Q: It is like the IRA.

CAHILL: Go to the north Bronx to see IRA funds collected.

Q: People who leave a country tend to want to preserve the old hatreds more often than the people in the country.

CAHILL: They glory and find virility in it. They are snugly safe from negative consequences.

Q: How did you evaluate Ambassador Elbrick in running the embassy when you were there?

CAHILL: He gave the appearance of a veteran skipper who smoothly sailed over the seas. Dignifiedconfident, aware, outwardly relaxed. Thoroughly professional.

WARREN ZIMMERMAN
Press/Political Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1965-1968)

Ambassador
Yugoslavia (1989-1992)

Ambassador Warren Zimmerman was born in Pennsylvania in 1934. He

graduated fro Yale University, received a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Cambridge and served in the U.S. Army in 1959. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1961, his postings abroad included Caracas, Belgrade, Moscow, Paris, Madrid, Vienna, and Geneva, with an ambassadorship to Yugoslavia. Ambassador Zimmerman was interviewed in 1996 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: It does seem incredible. What about the nationalities problem> Again we were talking about at that time how Tito was handling it, how we saw Serbia, Croatia, Bosnians, etc.

ZIMMERMANN: I have to say I was not really aware of the depth of the nationality problem. This may have been because I was naive or it may have been because this was one thing Yugoslavs tended to try to hide from foreigners. It also may be that it was not as big a problem as all that. We knew there was a problem in Kosovo, the southern province of Serbia that the Serbs were pressing very hard against the Albanians there, and that there were rumored atrocities and torturings and so forth. We also knew there was a strong outbreak of language nationalism in Croatia. Their view was that Serbo-Croatian is not a language. Croatian is a separate language. We have to have our own words, and that this could spill over very quickly into political tension as it did in 1971 when Tito then purged a group of so-called Croatian nationalists. I remember believing, and I think I actually said this in various reports and speeches, that Yugoslavia is not the most unstable country in Europe, that you don't have to worry about Yugoslavia staying together. It will stay together at least as long as Tito is there. So, I have to say I didn't take the nationalism problem very seriously in the 1960s.

Q: It was my impression (I was not a political officer. I was a consular officer. We overlapped part of the time. I left a little before you did) that Tito was really working hard on suppressing the nationalist thing. It was brotherhood and unity was sort of the motto. Maybe the new generation growing up would not have the same feelings. This is naive as hell on my part but I think maybe this positive feeling kind of permeated the embassy officers. Did you have any feeling?

ZIMMERMANN: I think that might be true. On the one hand, Tito cracked down very hard on any outbreak of nationalist sentiment. That is very intimidating, of course, so there wasn't very much that was visible. I think the point you make is actually quite interesting, that we were still just a generation away from WWII when we were in Yugoslavia in the 1960s. So people who had been young in their teens and twenties in that war, were still only in their 40s in the 60s. They had a very clear memory of the horrors of that war, and they may have felt that we have to transcend this. We have to get away from this kind of approach. So many Yugoslavs were killed by other Yugoslavs in WWII. But if you then fast forward to 25 years later, the people who were in their 40s are now in their 60s and 70s. They are retired for most cases. They don't count any more. The people who are in their 40s now are people who don't remember the war, who don't remember what happened, who don't remember how horrible it was. It is quite conceivable that that generational gap made it easy for the dictators, the nationalist dictators of today to find a following.

Q: I remember when you would strip everything else away and think about what was American policy towards Yugoslavia, that if Yugoslavia broke up, it would immediately, having

Hungarians and Bulgarians and Croats and Serbs going at each other within these borders, offer an opportunity for the Soviet Union to come. In a way Yugoslavia and Berlin were the two places where it looked like world war III could start because it would be very hard for either the Soviets or the American allies to stand still if the other started meddling in that country.

ZIMMERMANN: I don't think that is an unreal scenario. Back in the '60s certainly it wasn't. If Yugoslavia broke up, there would certainly be a Soviet bid to take over the eastern and southern part and perhaps to get as far as the Adriatic because Montenegro which has always been a rather pro Soviet part of Yugoslavia has some coastline on the Adriatic. The Soviets because of the Albanian defection and because of the Yugoslav defection had been denied access to the Adriatic. A Yugoslav breakup would have given them the opportunity to strike, to go for that. I think there was a real danger they would have done it. They could have come pouring through Bulgaria, through Hungary, so I don't think that is an unreal scenario at all. It was in our interest to help to keep Yugoslavia together, and Tito was the only available instrument for doing that. I don't apologize for the policy at all. I think it was the right policy.

Q: I can remember as I drove through Bosnia and Montenegro particularly in Bosnia seeing these roads that all of a sudden got very wide, and you knew they were to be used as airfields in case of something happening. It was at least my impression that the Yugoslav army was poised to fight the Soviets if they came in. That seemed to be where they were pointed towards.

ZIMMERMANN: The only possible opponent. They weren't going to fight the American army.

Q: What about Bosnia-Herzegovina. Was that even considered a separate place or was that just neutral ground?

ZIMMERMANN: No, it was considered a separate place. It was an independent separate republic. It was one of the six republics. It had a somewhat corrupt communist leadership that played the national key very carefully. It had just so many Muslims, so many Serbs, so many Croats in positions of power. Certainly not reformist, not particularly western oriented, kind of a sleepy communist rule. Macedonia was at that point not reformist either although it became quite reformist well before it became independent. Montenegro had just undergone another coup d'état like Kosovo orchestrated by Milosevic which brought into power a young leadership, some of them in their 20s who talked a good game on economic reform but turned out to be pretty close to Milosevic, and the ones that weren't were quickly purged out of that leadership, which quickly fell under the control of Momir Bulatovic who is now prime minister of Yugoslavia.

Q: What were you getting from both sides of the, both the Albanians and the Serbs there?

ZIMMERMANN: Actually the prime minister of Kosovo was an Albanian. He was the sort of person the Serbs referred to as an honest Albanian, that meant Albanian Quislings, people who supported Serbs. He had a Serbian wife. My meeting with him was horrifying in one sense. He was very nervous, and there were a lot of people around him. He did not meet me alone with one or two aides. There quite a lot of people in the room. They seemed to be watching very carefully what he said. He went through the line which was everybody's got their rights in Kosovo; it is absolutely wrong that the Albanians have been deprived of anything. I said, "It doesn't seem to

be the view of too many observers." Did he have any idea what the future would be and what should be done in the future. "Yes," he said, "all political prisoners should be released." At that point I looked around and saw some of these hard act characters who were watching him and did not look very happy. I noticed that this was a proposal that was never again repeated. You would talk to Serbs who were high up in the administration or important in cultural affairs or in the parliament, and they would be very arrogant about the Albanians. The Albanians on the other hand, seemed very cowed, I thought. I met Rugova for the first time who was the formal head of the Albanian movement, a cultural figure. He was a poet. I met him in the union of writers building in Pristina, and they didn't seem to have an idea of what to do. It was pretty clear they did not feel that they had any power base to speak of except the people themselves in Kosovo. Ultimately they worked out a strategy which was to pull out Albanians from every institution including hospitals and schools that they weren't already expelled from, in other words try to take the trend the Serbians had started to keep the Albanians out, take it even to a higher degree by pulling themselves out thereby creating a situation in which you had two cultures in Kosovo which did not rub up against each other very much. This was very different from Bosnia where there was always, even during the war, a lot of interchange among the different ethnic groups.

Q: You haven't mentioned, and I can't remember where, Bosnia, Herzegovina. Was that a republic at the time?

ZIMMERMANN: Bosnia Herzegovina was a republic. It was a republic that was created by Tito after the war so it had the same status as Serbia or Croatia or Slovenia. Of course, being a multi ethnic republic, a kind of a mini-Yugoslavia that way, it used what they called the national key. The party and the government were always run by a combination of Serbs, Croats and Muslims. When you had the elections in Bosnia Herzegovina, you had a Muslim candidate who ran on a Muslim ticket. You had a Serbian candidate who ran on a Serbian ticket. The Croatian candidate was the only one who actually had a multi-ethnic approach. So, Bosnia, just like Yugoslavia, was bifurcated or trifurcated into nationalist parties who were scrambling or struggling for control.

Q: Well, at the central government then, did this mean there was a new form of representation?

ZIMMERMANN: Yes. Well, the parliament was essentially paralyzed. Markovic was very anxious to have parliamentary elections on a Yugoslav-wide basis, because he wanted to get an electoral mandate like the other leaders in the republics. He wanted to be able to say I am a representative of the people as prime minister of Yugoslavia. But most of the power in the Parliament was on republican lines. The republics voted as blocs in the parliament. They blocked that. They prevented Markovic from having federal elections while they were going ahead and having their elections in their republics. So, the immobility of the parliament was another nail in Markovic's coffin.

Q: Was Bosnia considered a particular problem at the time, or was that something that developed later on?

ZIMMERMANN: Bosnia came on the radar screen as a problem when it became possible that Croatia would declare independence, because there is a Croatian population in Bosnia, and there is a Serbian population in Bosnia. Croatia's independence was a vital issue for Croats and for

Serbs. The president of Bosnia Izetbegovic won the presidency on a very strong Muslim religious ticket. He had not run for election as a fan of multi-ethnic society. He had run as a Muslim. But when he got into power, that is not the right word for Bosnia, when he got into office - he certainly had no power - he understood that if he was going to hold Bosnia together, he had to reach out to the other communities, the Croat and Serb communities, and he had to try to make liaisons with other people in Yugoslavia who cared about holding the country together. He made a very close alliance with the leader of Macedonia, Kiro Gligorav who was a wonderful old liberal communist figure, and was the president of Macedonia. Izetbegovic said early on, "If Croatia becomes independent, Bosnia will be destroyed." He said that to Baker when Baker came to Belgrade. It was a very dramatic moment. Of course that is exactly what happened. There probably were ways to save Bosnia. I don't see the same inevitability about the war in Bosnia that I do about the breakup of Yugoslavia. There, I think the west might have had a role. First of all, when the Yugoslav army started committing very violent acts against civilian populations in Croatia, particularly destroying the city of Vukovar and shelling Dubrovnik, this wonderful medieval town, the west did not react. NATO did not take any action. I think in retrospect, and I hadn't recommended this at the time, if NATO had done that, the Serbs might have shelved their strategy for Bosnia which was to incrementally declare independent Serbian areas in Bosnia supported by the Yugoslav army, and then ultimately just take over 2/3 of the country. That was clearly, as we look back on it now, what the Serbs and the Yugoslav army intended to do. I think if NATO had shown some muscle, this would have been in the summer and fall of 1991, they might not have gone ahead and implemented that plan. The Bosnian war started in April of 1992. Izetbegovic by the late summer of '91, was getting almost hysterical about what might happen in Bosnia. He was asking for UN peace keepers to come in in a preventive mode, and he was turned down flat on that. Then he switched himself from saying Yugoslavia had to hold together, he began to say, well, maybe Bosnia should be independent, hoping that the west would defend Bosnia, which it didn't do.

Q: Did you see any hope of getting any response from, or was there any hope of getting a response from NATO or something?

ZIMMERMANN: It wasn't even on the radar screen. There was some effort by the French to react to the bombing of Dubrovnik, but there wasn't a single American politician that I know of, - not even Senator Dole who was a very strong advocate of Croatia and Croatian independence - who was arguing that American forces should be engaged. I think we could have done some things with air power. Certainly we could have gotten rid of the artillery in the hills over Dubrovnik very easily I believe. These issues all came back again in the Bosnian war when the Serbs began to exterminate people, Muslim villages along the border of Serbia and Bosnia, along the Drina River. The first two or three months of that war was the bloodiest time. This was all undoubtedly a plan. It wasn't all mistakes or people out of control, they were sanctioned to kill. I think, and by then I was an activist on this, that the use of air power by NATO would have stopped the Serbs from doing what they were doing and pushed them into a negotiation which would have ended up in a much better situation for Bosnia than the Dayton agreement three years later could produce.

Q: You were there until when?

ZIMMERMANN: Until May of '92. I was withdrawn with the other NATO ambassadors by our governments as a sign of protest against what the Serbs were doing in Bosnia.

Q: Was the same animosity shown between Serbs and Croats as between Serbs and Muslims? You know, you look at two different wars.

ZIMMERMANN: Probably not quite. There probably would have been the same animosity if the Croatian war had gone on as long as the Bosnian war. Bosnia was a bolder conception if I can use that euphemism for the Serbs. The Serbs wanted to take over 2/3 of Bosnia. They had absolutely no claim to it at all. They couldn't even invent a claim to it. That would require a lot of killing of Muslims. The decided they were prepared to do that. In Croatia, their aims were far more restricted. They simply wanted to carve off the piece of land where most of the Serbs in Croatia lived. There were plenty of atrocities in Croatia, but they don't add up to the numbers that you saw in Bosnia.

Q: Now what had happened in Bosnia when you left?

ZIMMERMANN: The war had been going on for about six weeks. There had been the immediate invasion across the Serbian border of the irregulars, paramilitaries, and they had shot up a lot of Bosnian towns and killed and imprisoned a lot of Muslims. The Bosnian Serb army had emerged, this was one of the great con jobs of military history. Officers and men of the Yugoslav army who came from Bosnia were all transferred back into Bosnia as members of the Yugoslav army. Then at a given time they all became the Bosnian Serb army all of a sudden. They were all from the Yugoslav army including their commander, the nefarious General Mladic who was a colonel in the Yugoslav army. So, the Serbs had an army of trained people with arms and equipment amounting to about 65,000 people, which is a good sized European army. Whereas the Muslims started with nobody.

Q: At a certain point were you changing the focus of your attention between the Croats and the Serbs and getting over to Bosnia?

ZIMMERMANN: Yes, by the fall of '91 Bosnia became I guess, really our major subject at issue.

Q: What was your impression of Izetbegovic

ZIMMERMANN: A weak man, not a bad man, too manipulated by stronger people and more radical people, somebody who was trying to do the right thing in terms of creating a sense of tolerance among the three faiths and races, ethnic groups in Bosnia. Not quite up to the job I would say, but certainly not the demon figure that the Serbs made out of him.

Q: Did you see any hope; was there any hope, or was this part of a longer plan of Milosevic that Bosnia was going to be taken over more or less?

ZIMMERMANN: The Serbian plan for Bosnia began to be visible in April of '91. Unfortunately we didn't see it in all of its implications then. It was to have the Bosnian Serbs pick fights with

the Muslim leadership, declare different pieces of Bosnia autonomous. The army would come in to "protect the population there" but would effectively guarantee the autonomy of these pieces. They would become ink spots all over Bosnia, areas which did not recognize the government of Bosnia's control. Then to pull people out of the Bosnian assembly and the Bosnian government because they were Serbs. Of course by the national key there were Serbs in the assembly and the government. To pull those out thereby again weakening and challenging the control of the government. Then to have the military come in, the Yugoslav army which of course had a right to be in Bosnia because it was a part of Yugoslavia, to arm the local Serbian population and to deny arms to the Muslims, and then to ultimately to declare an independent Bosnian Serb republic in Bosnia. Then to spread the territory that republic controlled up to 64% was the number you usually heard, so 2/3 of the territory of Bosnia. This for a population that was only about 1/3 the population of Bosnia. They explained that by saying that Muslims live in cities, so they can have cities except Sarajevo. They can't have that, but they can have most of the other cities. Since Serbs are farmers they get the land. So it was all very logical, and anywhere Serbs are buried is of course Serbian territory, so that is a new principle as well. This was all worked out with the Yugoslav army. All through the Bosnian war, the Bosnian Serb army was paid from the Yugoslav army and equipped. There wasn't even much of a secret about it. That was the plan.

Q: Did you ever talk to Karadzic?

ZIMMERMANN: Karadzic, I talked to him a lot, yes.

Q: How did he strike you?

ZIMMERMANN: I think quite mad. I think he was quite mad, a raving nationalist. Soft spoken so you don't get the full effect of it until you actually listen to what he is telling you, which is that Muslims are iniquitous, they always lie and cheat and steal. You Americans don't understand them because you haven't lived in the Balkans and I have, but that is the way they are. The only way to deal with them is to oppress them. It is the only way. A southern racist from 1850 would have sounded smoother than that.

Q: Warren, how did you leave? Were you pulled out when all our ambassadors were pulled out? Was that it?

ZIMMERMANN: Yes. Well, the Bosnian war began in early April of '92, and it became immediately clear that Milosevic was pulling the strings on this. So I was sent in to see him several times in the next couple of weeks to remonstrate with him and to complain about the aggression that he was launching against the Muslims. Of course he would shrug it all off. He would say, "I don't have anything to do with Bosnia. I am the president of Serbia. You know that. Bosnia is not my problem. If you want to talk about Bosnia, go to the Bosnians, not to me." Finally my instructions got stronger and stronger, and he had a harder and harder time denying that he had anything to do with it. But it was very clear both in the press reporting and the views of Washington of the government, Milosevic was guilty, the prime malefactor in Bosnia. So our quarrel was more with him than with anybody else. Finally because nobody could think of anything else to do, the decision was made, we don't want to do business with these characters. So NATO took a decision, on U.S. initiative to withdraw the ambassadors. Leave the embassies

under charges. Embassies never disappear, they keep going right through everything, and the ambassadors left. I had a very surreal experience the night before I left. Since we were pulled out in a hurry, we had quite a lot of food in the freezer and alcohol and stuff around so we thought why not have a farewell party on short notice for the people we really like, the people who stood for the kinds of things the west stood for. So we got the word out. Of the people we invited everybody came. There wasn't a single person who didn't come. Sixty-five people came, a former foreign minister who resigned because he couldn't stand Milosevic, members of the Serbian opposition. We didn't have time to get people from Croatia. These were all people from Belgrade. Vuk Draskovic, one of the opposition leaders, the other opposition leaders were all there, courageous journalists, human rights people, just friends. There were confessions. People would talk to us and tell us their innermost thoughts. This was the other Yugoslav, in the western, democratic Yugoslavia. You asked a minute ago if anybody was for the U.S. These people were, and they were and are wonderful people because they weren't taken in by the nationalist rhetoric that you heard all around. Draskovic who had a reputation as an opportunist came up to me and said, "I just want to promise you, I have real conviction of loyalty to western values and market economy." He was a bout 80% right I guess in what happened. Midway through the party, Arkan sent his men up disrupt the party. Arkan actually had his ice cream store just three or four blocks away from my residence. We knew it was Arkan because my very alert Serbian driver noticed his jeep. He knew what his jeep was and he saw it. These guys came up in jeeps and they started to spray toxic poison what do you call it, for getting rid of bugs.

Q: Fumigating.

ZIMMERMANN: Yes, all around the garden. It was a nice night and we were having the party outside. They were trying to drive the guests away. My driver took them on for which he got a full shot of this toxic stuff in the eyes. But they did go away. We didn't know what to tell the guests until one of them came up to us and said, "We noticed you are spraying in the garden. How did you manage to find that really good spray? We have been looking for it for a very long time." So they didn't know that Arkan had made a failed attempt to disrupt our party. That was the night before I left. The morning I left, I got my final instruction to go in to complain to Milosevic, if I could find him, but he wasn't available. He was never available on weekends, so I talked to his foreign minister. Another demarche railing at them for what they were doing in Bosnia. I spent literally up until the time I had to leave for the airport to leave the country telling this guy how strongly we objected to what they were doing. Very smoothly, he was a former diplomat, a former Yugoslav diplomat, he was coming back at me with all the defenses that they used. Finally I got exasperated and I said, "I have to go, but I just have to ask you one question, which is how does an intelligent man like you who has been a diplomat and seen the world and been in the west and by the way has a Croatian wife, how can you believe this bullshit that you are telling me?" He told me he believed it. Then I left.

Q: Well, I think for many of us who knew Yugoslavia, you could understand what happened in the '30s in Germany better. I mean, you know, you kind of wonder how could the Germans have done that, but then you watch it being repeated.

ZIMMERMANN: Yes. If you are just a common person, a normal person, it is easier to go with the people in power. Your job isn't going to be threatened. You are not going to be called a

traitor. You are not going to get in trouble, just easier to go along. And if you are going to go along, that is the first step. The second step might be get a little enthusiastic about it because these demagogues give you wonderful arguments. They sound very persuasive. They show you television footage of Croats massacring Serbian youths and the same footage of course, exactly the same footage is found in Croatia with the names changed.

Q: I am told there was even some that came out of WWI got reused again and again. When you came back what sort of a... What did they do with you? What were you up to?

ZIMMERMANN: Well, I came back and I immediately started to work as the head of the refugee bureau. I was back in the Bosnia picture again because we were beginning to have a lot of refugee problems. But I debriefed. I talked to a lot of people including Baker and Scowcroft and Eagleburger. Being out, I began to think, and that's when I began to lobby rather hard for air strikes. I hadn't come out for air strikes while I was in Belgrade. When I got out and began to put things together a little bit, I began to realize what we really needed to do was to take out the Serbian installations over the hills in Sarajevo for example, the communications lines and so forth, and I was convinced then as I still am, that had we done that, it would have been relatively cost free, and we would have driven the Serbs to the negotiating table where they would have settled for a lot less than they settled for today. We would have saved 100,000 lives.

Q: Well, what happened?

ZIMMERMANN: I had a long talk with Scowcroft. Eagleburger was strongly against the use of force for Vietnam reasons. People who had experience in Vietnam simply didn't want to go down that road again and he felt this was going down that road again. Scowcroft, of course, had been in Vietnam as had Colin Powell. I had the feeling that Scowcroft was listening to me more than the others were. He kept me longer in the office than he should have. We looked at scenarios, where would you bomb, how would you do this and so forth. I had the feeling that maybe he was thinking about it. But I think in retrospect it wasn't going to happen. It was an election year. Bush was running. He didn't want to get mired down. I think he himself was hard over against the use of American military anyway. Then I took a month vacation. I came back in the fall. I went quite often with Eagleburger to deputies committee meetings where policy was being thrashed out. It was very clear by the way those meetings were being run by the national Security Council, that we weren't going to do a thing. The Pentagon and the Joint Chiefs and the office of the Secretary of Defense representative would come in absolutely hard against any use of American soldiers. If you were a uniformed American soldier, you had to get permission from the Secretary of Defense even to go to Bosnia. Every initiative that was proposed for humanitarian relief that involved the U.S. military was opposed by the Pentagon. Opening a road from the coast to go to Sarajevo, nixed by the Pentagon. Using air force planes to beam television images so people could get a more objective view, killed by the Pentagon. No fly zones, killed by the Pentagon. Air drops of relief of places you couldn't got to by road, killed by the Pentagon. Ultimately many of these things were done very successfully but over the dead body of the military.

Q: Was it the Vietnam sort of a Weinberger doctrine?

ZIMMERMANN: The word Vietnam, you never heard it, not in those meetings anyway, but it was definitely Weinberger Powell doctrine. You don't engage militarily unless you have absolutely a 100% chance of success. Unless you have an exit strategy whatever that means or unless you have assurance that there would be no casualties or very few. We would never have gone into the Gulf War if we had applied those rules because they were expecting a lot of casualties in the Gulf War. Our casualties were much less in the Gulf War than were expected, and Bush had the courage then to go in and do it, do what had to be done. But he didn't have it in Bosnia.

WALLACE W. LITTELL
Public Affairs Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1970-1974)

Wallace W. Littell was born in Pennsylvania and raised in Iowa. His career at USIA included posts in Moscow, Warsaw, Belgrade and East Berlin. Mr. Littell was interviewed by Robert Martens on October 1, 1992.

Q: *How would you compare your ability to operate in the information-cultural field with the Soviet Union and/or Poland? Perhaps more with Poland.*

LITTELL: The difference between Poland and the Soviet Union was very great, as I said, although the Polish officials were subject to Party discipline and authority. In Yugoslavia the differences were not that great to what I experienced in Germany years ago. It was a good period. It was a period when the Yugoslavs welcomed the expansion of our information and cultural program in Yugoslavia; primarily because the Soviets, who, in the period before Tito's break with Moscow, had established information centers, would never let the Yugoslavs have information centers in Moscow or the Soviet Union, and the Yugoslavs were trying to pressure the Soviets by giving us more information centers because we gave them reciprocity if they wanted it. They could establish information centers in the United States. It didn't work out in that the Soviets, of course, did not let anybody establish information centers in the Soviet Union. But it meant that our activities were quite free. Occasionally we would run into the Party bureaucracy, but it was not a thing that bothered us a lot. To get our information centers we signed an information agreement with Yugoslavia, which was a state-to-state agreement, and which enabled them to have information centers in the United States if they wanted to establish them. But once they were established then we were in good shape for access to the Yugoslav people.

There were differences in negotiating among the Republics. I found the negotiations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has a dominant Muslim population -- actually Herzegovina is solidly Muslim, but Bosnia has a larger Muslim population than either Orthodox Serb or Catholic Croat, and I found the negotiations with the authorities there sort of mid-eastern, Arabic Turkish. I guess it was Ottoman empire Turkish, probably. But they were a little more devious, and difficult to deal with, but we were able to accomplish it. The Macedonians, on the other hand, were very

forthcoming and really quite easy to deal with in the negotiations. But there are cultural and historical differences between the peoples.

DONALD C. TICE
Yugoslavia Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1970-1972)

Political Counselor
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1972-1975)

Born in Kansas in 1932, Donald C. Tice received his BS from the University of Kansas and served in the U.S. Air Force form 1954 to 1956 as a second lieutenant. His foreign assignments included Antwerp, Montreal, Sofia and Belgrade. He was interviewed on February 10, 1997 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Then in 1970 where did you move?

TICE: I was moved to the Yugoslav Desk.

Q: You were on the Yugoslav Desk from 1970 to...

TICE: 1972.

Q: What was the situation in Yugoslavia during the period 1970-1972?

TICE: Tito was still riding high. Of course in the late 1940's he had made his break with Stalin. There had been a decade of U. S. aid to Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav economy was good and improving. Yugoslavia had a sort of "semi-convertible" currency. Most Yugoslavs could get passports and travel to the West without any problems. So Yugoslavia acted in many ways like a Western country. At the time the interest of the Nixon administration was to try to see what they could do to "bolster" the arrangements which Tito had put in place so that Titoism would survive Tito. For example, that was one of the things that I got involved in when I was on the Yugoslav Desk. A request had come down from the NSC [National Security Council] for recommendations on what the United States Government could do to improve the chances for stability in the Balkans after Tito passed from the scene.

I had made several trips out to Yugoslavia and was monitoring all the reporting traffic, so I was fairly conversant with what was happening there. We knew that there was real resentment in Yugoslavia on the part of the Bosnians and Slovenes because we had closed Consulates in Sarajevo and in Ljubljana. So the Yugoslav desk officer in USIA [United States Information Agency], Bruce Jackson, another middle grade officer, and I sat down and discussed this issue. We came up with the idea of putting USIS [United States Information Service] offices in each of the capitals of the Federation of Yugoslavia. This would include offices in Skopje in Macedonia, Titograd in Montenegro, Sarajevo in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ljubljana in Slovenia, and Novi Sad

in the Voivodina, and Pristina in the Kosovo. We already had a good, separately housed (from the Embassy Chancery) USIS center in the heart of the university area in Belgrade, and co-located with our Consulate General in Zagreb.

So we wrote up a recommendation to this effect. It really was a case of the "man with a memo" theory making policy. That memo went whistling right through the bureaucratic layers in State and on to the NSC. The first thing I knew was that I had USIA "mad" at me because suddenly, by White House "fiat," their budget was being drawn on to fund the opening of additional USIS centers in Yugoslavia. This happened during the first year I was on the Yugoslav desk. By the time I left there at the end of two years, we had already opened the first additional USIS center in Sarajevo. I left the desk and went to Belgrade as Political Counselor. During my tour there, we installed Centers in Ljubljana and Skopje, and plans were progressing for Titograd. The centers in Pristina and Novi Sad were put on hold because of questions raised about their somewhat different status as “semi autonomous” parts of the Republic of Serbia.

The whole thrust of U. S. policy was how could we make sure that Yugoslavia would not fall apart when Tito died.

Q: I have to say that at one point George Kennan, while he was Ambassador to Yugoslavia, asked me, as the chief of the Consular Section in Belgrade, for my views on whether we should close the Consulate in Sarajevo. I said: "Well, from the purely consular point of view, why not?" So he closed the Consulate in Sarajevo.

TICE: So you "undid" my work! [Laughter] Well, my comment would be: "So, now we've got Embassies in other countries, all over the place.

Q: I always checked with the local police. If I were traveling, for example, up in the hills of Bosnia, I would always go to a police station and say: "I'm the American Consul. I'm looking for such and such," so they knew exactly what I was doing and they could report back in to their superiors. I made quite sure that I wasn't surprising them.

TICE: It was a very different atmosphere. I was there in Yugoslavia from 1972 to 1975. However, the Bulgarians officials were mean and nasty. There were all sorts of sexual compromise attempts on us. As a matter of fact, occasionally I would be warned to be particularly careful about what I was doing and where I was, and to have somebody with me all the time for a while. I would say: "What's this about?" The person warning me would say: "I can't tell you in detail, but just be alert."

The only other, nasty incident while I was in Bulgaria was at a trade fair in 1964. We had a U.S. pavilion there.

Q: Was this at Plovdiv?

TICE: Yes, the Plovdiv trade fair. We used to joke that we could have put the American flag over the front end of the pavilion and put one of our USIA [United States Information Agency] employees, who was originally Russian, outside to greet the people, and we would have gotten

the biggest crowd at the fair, just by being there. The Bulgarian people were very quiescent and subdued, politically. However, they loved America. They would turn out for anything American.

The incident I mentioned happened one evening when I had to go back to my hotel to get something. It was toward evening closing time, and when I came back in though the main gate, a couple of the "goons" jumped me. I didn't fight back. I just "took the fall" [i.e., let them beat me up]. They whacked me a few times and then ran off. I went into the pavilion and told Minister Anderson, who happened to be visiting at the time, what had happened. She immediately began to raise all sorts of hell with the authorities.

They were evidently looking for some American to precipitate an incident. Following along behind me was a Serbian-American named Nick Lalic. He was with the U. S. Department of Commerce trade fair organization. When Nick came through the gate, the "goons" jumped him. Nick was about 6'4" and weighed about 280 pounds, or something like that. He just turned around and splattered one of the "goons" against a wall and slugged the other one. Then they put the regular cops on him and arrested him on a charge of precipitating an "incident." They had apparently hoped to try that with me. I hadn't been there very long and would have been a good "catch" because I was a language officer. They could have PNGed [declaring him "Persona Non Grata"] me early on in my tour. We had to get Nick out of the country fast.

The Bulgarians did that kind of thing. You just had to be careful. The listening "bugs" in our apartment were obvious. On occasion, when it was quiet in the apartment, the surveillance folks would turn up the gain on their microphones so that they would be sure of not missing anything. When they did this, our French poodle would bark and point at the nearest listening device. We knew from this where they were -- under the living room couch, under the dining room table, in the den by the telephone, and under the bed in the master bedroom. [Laughter]

WILLIAM A. WEINGARTEN
Economic Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1971-1974)

Mr. Weingarten was born in New York in 1936. He received his BA from Colgate University and his MSFS from Georgetown University. He served in the U.S. Army overseas from 1958-1961. His postings after entering the Foreign Service in 1962 included Paris, My Tho, Belgrade, Brussels, Canberra and Ottawa. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 29, 1999.

Q: *This was in Bosnia.*

WEINGARTEN: Yes. It was after the war with the Slovenians and after the Vukovar battle with the Croats. And this was just guys that had come down in the mud and they'd killed all these... Bijeljina - it was at Bijeljina, in Bosnia... killed all these old folks, lying there, and there was a picture of a guy with an AK-47 taking a kick at the head of one of these dead people. And I said, these are not the Serbs I knew.

Q: *Yes.*

WEINGARTEN: They were solid and very hardy and rugged folks, but you didn't think they would go after old women and old geezers [men], but they did. And so you just had to reexamine our feelings about the Serbs. We *loved* Serbia.

Q: *Oh, we did, too.*

WEINGARTEN: We had a marvelous time.

Q: *We had five years there, and just loved it.*

WEINGARTEN: Our kids loved it. Our kids learned to play soccer with Yugoslav kids. I used to run sports programs there, and I'd seek out Yugoslav kids to come and play soccer. They taught the American kids; they also didn't take any guff either. And I just thought they were terrific people. But of all the countries I served in, I think that would be the one I would not go back to at this time. I'd have a hard time with that. Have you been back?

Q: *I've been back to Bosnia twice as an election monitor.*

WEINGARTEN: When?

Q: *Last year and the year before*.

WEINGARTEN: Oh, okay. How do you find it?

Q: *Well, it's a different world, just a different world. I find I had very little sympathy... I have no sympathy for the Serbs. Some of my fellow officers who served there, I think, can't get rid of that bonding or something, but I didn't.*

WEINGARTEN: I just could have no sympathy whatsoever for anybody that did that. And I'm sorry, in a way, that in this war that we have just waged in Kosovo we didn't come to grips with these people, the Captain Arkans and Seselj crowd.

Q: *Were you able to make trips out into the country?*

WEINGARTEN: Oh, yes, quite a lot, and we used to go pheasant hunting down in Bosnia, down around Brcko. A lovely area, you go out, and there were always... I spoke Serbian, but the embassy always wanted you to go out with someone else. They didn't want you to go out into the country by yourself, so I always went with my assistant, whom you've probably met - Anda Miloslavjevic, who used to work... Well, anyway-

Q: *Later, of course, these things we're talking about now - we're talking in 1999 - and Western Europe and the United States have been very heavily involved in the breakup of Yugoslavia - did you get any feel for the divisions in that society?*

WEINGARTEN: No, I never did, and the funny thing is that both my wife and I spoke Serbian. We had Serbian friends. We traveled a lot within Serbia. We liked the place. We knew the people. People could tell that we liked it, so that helps them to be more open. We always admired the Serbs, thought the Serbs were terrific, straightforward, gutsy people. But you got a sense that a lot of history had passed between these people, but you never had any slightest inkling that they would ever take after each other the way they did. And I remember one of the most shocking things I've ever seen was coming back on a plane from Paris to Washington after a meeting in Paris and reading *Newsweek*, which I never read. I picked it up on the plane and read it, and I saw a picture of one of Captain Arkans' people in Bijeljina, in Bosnia, and it was just after they'd finished killing some unarmed civilians, and they were lying in the street-

Q: *This was during the Bosnian-*

WEINGARTEN: Yes, this was '91, right in the beginning. And this one guy, this thuggish looking guy, was kicking one of these dead people in the head. I think you'd recall the picture if you saw it again. I was shocked by that. I said I couldn't believe that Serbs could do this sort of thing. I always thought that they were... because they had propagated this myth that they had fought the Germans to a standstill in World War II, which as it turns out was a myth. The Germans only had a few divisions in Yugoslavia, and for the most part these guys fought each other. But still the myth lasts that they were brave and forthright kind of people that wouldn't kill women and kids and old people, but it turns out that they did. But you didn't have the impression going around Yugoslavia that this sort of thing was just beneath the surface, but it must have been.

Q: *Were you getting a feel towards - now we call them the Kosovars or the Albanians there; we called them Sciptars in those times - I guess it was a derogatory term - but did you get any feel towards the Serb attitude towards those people at that time?*

WEINGARTEN: Well, Serbs didn't much like them, but at that time Kosovo was autonomous within the Federal Republic, and so they had rights there. They had rights until Milosevic took them away in '88-89. But it was dirt poor. It was really a dirt-poor area. There wasn't much going on there economically, and so we would go down to Priština sometimes and talk to people. We didn't spend a lot of time down there. It didn't seem like there was much going on. And there was no or very little Serb-Albanian... Serbs and Albanians didn't mix but they didn't seem to... they weren't at daggers-drawn - or at least not to an outsider. Have you been back?

Q: *I've been to Bosnia.*

WEINGARTEN: Oh, yes, you told me that. That's right. I'm not sure I'd want to go back. It's one of the only places I've been, I think, that I wouldn't want to go back to because Serbs that we knew would talk sometimes about Kosovo Polje and it's a historical kind of thing, and people talk about the Civil War here. But then who knows who you're talking to. How they managed to elect a government like Milosevic and support or at least tolerate people like Seselj and Arkans and thug outfits like that.

Q: *I have to say that I had a wonderful time, same as you, but I don't have any feeling of sympathy for the Serbs. I mean I find myself, these people, as a people, unfortunately, are responsible for some of the greatest horrors certainly in Western Europe.*

DOUGLAS G. HARTLEY
Commercial Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1972-1974)

Douglas G. Hartley was born in England in 1934 and received his Bachelor's Degree from Harvard University in 1955. After entering the Foreign Service in 1956, his postings abroad have included Copenhagen, Salzburg, Belgrade, Milan, Rome, Athens, London, and two tours in Brazil. Mr. Hartley was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Did you find that there was a difference between dealing with the different republics--I think in particular Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Those were the ones you had, weren't they?

HARTLEY: Yes.

Q: *Were things pretty much concentrated in Serbia?*

HARTLEY: There was the famous steelworks in Skopje, capital of Macedonia. They had a productivity of some 10 or 15 percent of capacity at max. We would go down there and see that. This was one of the prides of the Macedonian manufacturing sector. There was also the Bor Mines in Bosnia. But they had in our area, obviously around Belgrade, a concentration of manufacturers. You had Kragujevac, which was about a hundred kilometers south of Belgrade where they produced first the Zastava and then the infamous Yugo. The same company later started churning out armored vehicles. Serbia may have been starting to plan for a bust-up as early as the 1970s. I recall that the Bar-Belgrade railway was opened in 1974, the sole link between Belgrade and the Mediterranean through the port of Bar in Montenegro. But I had no business with military producers. I would get down to Montenegro, not that they had a great industrial base there, but it is a beautiful place with spectacular scenery, and, incidentally, Yugoslavia's leading brewery in Niksic.

Q: What about the embassy? How was what you were picking up? How was Tito seen in those days? He was getting pretty old.

HARTLEY: Yes. This was 1970-74. Tito hung onto until 1980 when he finally died. As I said, he spent more and more time being the benevolent dictator, leaving others to run the day-to-day business - unless he thought things were getting out of hand, if he felt the new class of managers or the enterprises were getting dishonest or corrupt or greedy/capitalist. In early 1974, he wrote an open letter called "Titovo Pismo (Tito's Letter)" which was sort of a wake-up call which of put people back into line quickly. Tito was ostensibly in the background, but he was very much

the power of the land, and whatever he said went. But I was amazed at the anti-Tito jokes I heard openly at parties and meetings in the Belgrade area. So people felt they could speak much more freely. Now the atmosphere was much more relaxed. There was lots more money around, there was a new class of managers who gave themselves plenty of perks, including big black Mercedes and weekend cottages on the coast. Yugoslavs could travel to adjoining countries - Austria and Italy - without a passport. They just needed their ID cards. The country, in a word, was at peace and quite prosperous, certainly it was way ahead of any of the other Eastern European countries under the Soviets. People often ask if we discerned any signs of dissatisfaction. You certainly did when you went to Slovenia. The Slovenes probably never saw themselves as a part of Yugoslavia. I remember in the hotels there was an advertisement for a restaurant-nightclub in each hotel. It was in five languages. None of the languages was Serbo-Croatian; they were - Slovenian, French, Italian, German and English. If you spoke Serbo-Croatian, you were liable to be answered in German. So, even at that time, they were feeling their oats, as it were. But though they resented Belgrade, they were also establishing through their big and relatively well organized companies, a real network through the whole country. Their hi-tech industries, such as Iskra, were unmatched in eastern Europe. I believe that our consulate in Zagreb had a greater awareness of the tensions lurking behind the facade, while the embassy in Belgrade tended to adhere more to the official line of "bratsvo i jedinstvo (brotherhood and unity)." How very wrong we were, in retrospect!

Q: When you traveled, did you feel that you were under observation or not? Or was that pretty much a thing of the past?

HARTLEY: I would say that when I was on field trips I did not feel observed at all. I had no sense of being followed. On the other hand, even back in the early '60s, one knew that occasionally one's phones were being tapped. We were told that anyway. And that certainly the locals and your servants were being surveyed and called in for reports. But I myself, the only time I was ever conscious of being followed was when I used to run the pouch down to Sarajevo back the first time I was in Yugoslavia, because the guy following me was extremely inept! But on the whole, I didn't feel I was under surveillance in Belgrade. The same was not true of Zagreb. I gather from the excellent memoirs "From Foggy Bottom to Capitol Hill" by Chips Chester, which has just been published by The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training's Arlington Hall Press. Since 1997 I have been a supervisor in four elections in Bosnia and one in Kosovo under the auspices of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe]. In 1998, I spent six weeks registering voters in a tiny Bosnian village perched near Srebenica. Situated on the border of the Muslim Federation and the Serb Republic of Bosnia, Sapna had been in the middle of the war zone. It was the kind of place I would never have known existed in my Foreign Service days, let alone living in it - and in a half constructed little house with a charming Muslim family, as one of two registrars, the other being a young Romanian.

LAWERENCE P. TAYLOR
Economic Officer
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1974-1976)

Lawrence P. Taylor was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1940. He graduated in 1963 from the University of Ohio with a degree in history and economics and received his MA from American University. He served as a member of the Peace Corps in the province of Antioquia in 1963. In addition to Colombia, he was posted to Yugoslavia, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Canada, England, and Estonia. He was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: *Was there any thought that, if Yugoslavia splits, there would be a Bosnian state?*

TAYLOR: No, not at the time I was there. People did not think of Bosnia as a genuine state at the time I was there. That was kind of a no-man's-land between Croatia and Serbia and was not thought of as having its own natural identity as a state.

Q: *Were there any major issues during this time. I mean, were you hit? What was it?*

TAYLOR: Well, some of the ones I mentioned were the Russia, the NATO, types of things, the situation of ethnic Russians living in Estonia - all these things were chronic, major things that were worked on over a long period of time. But right away, when I arrived, we were hit, both myself personally as well as many others, but also Estonia - we were all traumatized by the tragic death of Bob Frazier. Bob had been the first ambassador in Estonia; I was the second. And I thought the world of Bob, as did many other people who knew him, and of course, Estonia had a special place in its heart for Bob as the first American ambassador.

Q: *Can you explain what happened?*

TAYLOR: Yes, Bob was tragically killed in an automobile accident on a winding road in Bosnia, and dealing with that, the feelings that the country had, that we all had, that the FSN's had, that the Estonian leadership had was something that we just had to take on right away and do right, and I think we did. It sounds very personalized and small in a way, but it was quite a shock to us all and an emotional thing for us all and something that we had to handle in an appropriate and sensitive way if we were going to be proud of ourselves, all of us as we moved forward. And it thinks we did.

Q: *What was the Estonian view of events in Bosnia, because this was the whole development in the area, break up different ethnic groups and all that, and they must have taken a much harder look at it than, say, one of the Western countries?*

TAYLOR: The Estonian view of the events in Bosnia really boils down to something much more basic. Estonia wants strong U.S. leadership. Estonia sees its own future associated with that more than anything else, and Estonia wants it and will always support it, regardless of how it might differ analytically about events on the ground. And so Estonia welcomed the more assertive U.S. role that emerged in the mid-1990s and immediately volunteered to do whatever it could to support us.

Q: *Well, did you find, when you first went out there, the Clinton Administration was beginning to*

find its feet, and I can't remember exactly how you would time it, but maybe by '95 it wasn't looking too "ept" in the field of foreign affairs. I mean Clinton obviously was not focused on doing things in the foreign affairs field, and did you notice that, and did you notice a change when we decided to say "the hell with this" in Bosnia and also in Haiti and we put troops in and we started doing things?

TAYLOR: Well, absolutely. Again, the Estonians want that U.S. leadership and they're not going to second-guess it. They just want strong U.S. leadership. They're going to support it - for selfish reasons, because they believe, they're whole history and geography tells them that regardless of circumstances today, there will come a time again when push comes to shove in that part of the region, and their whole freedom will be put under a cloud. And when that happens, as they think it will, some day in some way, people in Moscow are not going to care what people in Helsinki or Bonn or London or Oslo think. They're only going to care what people in Washington think. So that is something the Estonians have fixed very clearly. That is why the Estonians want in NATO, frankly, and not in WEU [Western European Union]. They want a Transatlantic security relationship; they do not want a European security relationship alone.

Now that being said, let me also say that, while I agree in general about your characterization of the first years of the Clinton Administration as more or less finding their ways in foreign policy and maybe in other things as well, that was, with respect to the Baltics (as opposed to Bosnia or Somalia or somewhere else) not the case. The President had already established quite a positive involvement and legacy in the Baltics. He had visited Riga in 1994, was a smashing success, a smashing symbolic and substantive success. The Baltic States achieved their independence in '91 and '92, but Russian troops did not leave until '94, and there was a question all the way up to the day they left as to whether they would really leave. And I think the Baltic leaders rightly understand that without President Clinton's personal involvement in that question, the Russians probably would not have left. So we have that. Vice President Gore had gone to the region. Vice President Gore was in Estonia in March or April, I forget which, of 1995, so he had personally taken a role out there. So American foreign policy in this part of the world was actually seen as a success at that point. It was not finding its legs; it was on sound ground.

EDWARD C. MCBRIDE
Cultural Attaché, USIS
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1974-1978)

Edward C. McBride was born in Georgia in 1935. He graduated from The University of Georgia in 1959 with a degree in American Literature. He served USIA initially as a summer intern in 1962, which eventually developed into a career. While with USIA he has served in France, Senegal, Yugoslavia, Romania, Spain, England and also held positions in Washington DC. This interview was conducted in February, 2001 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Anyway, so where did you go, Belgrade?

MCBRIDE: I went to Belgrade, yes.

Q: And you were there from when to when?

MCBRIDE: I was in Belgrade for four years and a bit. I was there from '74 to '78, and so I saw a lot of the changes that were quite dramatic. Unfortunately not the demise of Tito, because that occurred after we left. But it was a wonderful time to be there because we were still in a way enchanted by the independent position that the Yugoslav government took with respect to the Soviet Union, and their worker self management concept which seemed to be all the rage and sort of seduced everybody who thought that this was a different path. Indeed it was to some extent, but it was a very exciting time to be there. I was the cultural attaché at the embassy again. We had a lot of activities and a lot of programs. Many of them were overfunded if I can say that. I think mainly because we were trying to lavish attention and court the Belgrade government. These programs were quite effective and helpful in doing that. So it was a great time to be in Yugoslavia, and with country wide responsibilities, I traveled from one end of the country to the other. In those days we had several American cultural centers in Yugoslavia. In addition to Belgrade, we had one in Novi Sad, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Sarajevo and Pristina. We also had one in Skopje. But that was quite an elaborate presence for those days.

Q: Let's talk about what you did and what was sort of the work.

MCBRIDE: Yes, the mainstay of the program in Yugoslavia from the cultural perspective was supporting the centers where we did active American programs. It involved speakers; it involved musical, cultural events, films. Each of the centers had a very good library. We promoted American studies through uses of the center. We had a very active, in fact in those days, the largest Fulbright program in eastern Europe. We also had the only binational commission in Eastern Europe, which was quite a feather in the cap of the Yugoslavs, again reflecting its independence. But we did manage with the Fulbright program to have the financial participation of the Yugoslav government. Sometimes it was difficult, but by an large, they were supportive to the extent of, I don't remember the figures exactly, but they put a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year into a program that was pushing a million dollars in those days. And because we had a binational commission, in addition to the government representatives to the ministry of education, we had other voices represented. From the arts community, I remember we had some very good people. We had a couple of writers. It was in fact more difficult to find Americans to serve on the committee who were not official Americans. But we did manage, and we had a pretty good selection. So the Fulbright program was important. The other program that warrants a little comment here was the so-called cultural presentations program that the State Department had been running for quite some time, to bring American visual and performing arts events to posts around the world. I think we were perhaps the last highly visible vestige of that program which, although it didn't go under, but it certainly went into a decline after that. But the performing arts in particular were very well represented in programs in Yugoslavia. That was because we had two big festivals there that had traditionally had important American representation. One was the Dubrovnik Summer festival which was a great cultural event on the Adriatic and brought performers from many countries. We had very heavy representation, primarily dance and music. We had the New York City Ballet was there. The Paul Taylor Dance

Company was there. The Los Angeles Philharmonic was there. Merce Cunningham was there. I mean there were very important American cultural events in all of Yugoslavia, but particularly in Dubrovnik. We also supported a theater festival in Belgrade called the Belgrade International Theater Festival. We brought many prominent theater companies. The Actor's Theater of Louisville was there. The Yale Rep was there. We did quite a bit in that field. It was interesting because again the Yugoslav government or the concert agencies, which were quasi governmental, were financial participants as well in most of these ventures, so we were able to do quite a bit. But with the two events that I have mentioned, and a strong and rather continuous flow of solo artists who came either to perform in concert, a pianist and violinist what have you, or as soloists with some of the local orchestras. The Zagreb Philharmonic was a very good orchestra, as was the Slovenian Philharmonic. Both at least once or twice a year in their seasons would have an American either as a soloist or a conductor or something like that. So it was quite an active time. That programmatically was what the cultural section was heavily involved with. Again as I say, because these programs were countrywide, I was on the road a lot and traveled all over Yugoslavia. I found it a very stimulating job. We met a lot of Yugoslavs and worked with different people in the arts, in theater, in music, and particularly in education.

Q: How did you find the artistic community, both theater and music, particularly theater and writing because as far as their relationship to the government? You know I am thinking, here is a communist society.

MCBRIDE: Sure. It had its good days and its bad days. A lot of it really depended on the current state of international relations. If there was a problem going in the bilateral relationship, we would usually get a very frosty reception, getting family member nominations for candidates for Fulbright programs or something. On the other hand, the artists asserted, and usually got away with, a fair degree of independence. But if they could, they ducked most of the hot political issues. But occasionally there would be times where we would find ourselves in an embarrassing situation because of one event or another. But more often than not, the obstacles came from very practical things. It was just like negotiating any other deal. I remember when we were negotiating to bring the Los Angeles Philharmonic to Yugoslavia, which we ultimately did, and they played in three cities and had a wonderful success. But the Yugoslav concert manager, who was involved in this, was negotiating on a lot of other deals which he simply didn't have the financial backing to pull off. We would find ourselves at the end pulling rabbits out of the hat, putting more money in projects to salvage what we knew was worth doing. But in a way it was gentle blackmail looking back on it, because I am sure the guy knew very well that he was in no position to deliver what he had agreed to provide. One example: the orchestra was coming to us from Rome, and he had agreed to provide an airplane to transport the orchestra over from Rome to Zagreb where they were to perform first. That was fine, but he produced an airplane which was too small to get the entire 120 odd member orchestra and their instruments and luggage on board. So in the end we had to go back and put extra money into chartering a larger plane. So little incidents like that made life interesting, but it also was an example of the resources that the Yugoslav government had available. But by and large, they met their commitments. You asked about writers. For example, there was a big festival every year in this lovely little place in Macedonia called Ohrid. Lake Ohrid is on the border between Albania and Yugoslavia. They sponsored a poetry festival there. We brought two or three very distinguished poets over in the time that I was there. One of them, Mark Strand, I remember particularly, had a huge success.

The Yugoslavs were always very careful to have stars from the east as well as the west, so there was a very heavy sprinkling of Czechs, of Russian poets and writers to match the French, the Americans and the other Yugoslav literary community who participated in this event.

Q: How about on the Fulbrights? So often from sort of the east, particularly from the Soviet Union exchange things would be heavily in to the from the eastern side, heavily into the sciences and all, and on the western side heavily into culture and language and that sort of thing.

MCBRIDE: That was absolutely true in Yugoslavia, and it was the one element in the mix that was a constant problem for us. We took the position on the American side that, the Fulbright program was open to all disciplines except medicine basically, that we had to uphold that principle, but we negotiated very tenaciously to bring some sort of balance to the program. We thought that it was important to see that the social sciences in particular were well represented, but we respected the right of the Yugoslavs. They were also financial partners and had a voice as far as the composition of the program was concerned. Ironically what happened in the end was that we won a victory of sorts. We did finally install the principle of balance in a structured way. What happened was that we would reserve a certain number of grants for the sciences, and a certain number of grants for the arts, the humanities, and the social sciences. In a way that saved the day. But the Yugoslav idea of balance was that they would send all scientists and technological folks to the U.S. and we would send all the social scientists and the literature people to Yugoslavia. We said, well that may be one way to look at balance, but it wasn't quite what we had in mind. But in the end we did succeed. We succeeded in large measure because we persuaded the Yugoslav government that the gentleman who had been running the commission, the executive director by tradition had been a Yugoslav, and the chairman of the commission had been an American. We persuaded the Yugoslavs that it would be in everyone's interest if we got a little fresh blood into the commission. The man who had been running it for almost 15 or 20 year, I think since its inception, was ultimately retired, and we did succeed in getting a far more enlightened and I thought rather pleasant man to take his place. The program then took a distinct upturn after that.

Q: Did you find that you were consciously or subconsciously in competition with the Soviet Union there culturally and all?

MCBRIDE: Interestingly enough I don't think I sensed that. The Soviet Presence was quite substantial, as you certainly know. But I think I looked more in terms of what other western governments were doing in terms of where we stood. I think the strongest other presence was perhaps the French. But the French had an interesting, it is funny how little things tweak your memory here. The French cultural center which was also a very active place in Belgrade and attracted a lot of attention, was run by a gentleman who was French, a French citizen, but whose name was Tolstoy. He was indeed a descendant of the great writer. That, I think, added stature in a subtle way to the French presence there. He did a very good job. He was very likable chap, and he ran a very good program. The French had a far larger budget at its disposal than we did certainly to promote French culture. And they did a lot more in language teaching than we did. We did no language teaching to amount to anything. We had a teacher training program that involved language, but the French were actually out there offering the man on the street an opportunity to come in and take French classes if they wanted to. Our teacher training program

was highly effective, and I think was also a big element of the overall success of our mission in Yugoslavia, because we taught teachers of English. We did seminars for teachers, and we must have done 30 or 40 a year. They were very professionally run. We had a very good local employee who was very well connected in educational circles, and she knew the English as a second language game very well. We worked with the Yugoslav government very cooperatively. A new partner after about a year, thanks to a deal that I negotiated, was the British Council. We went together with the British and offered English language seminars. We jointly funded and jointly sponsored programs..Before that we had been competitive. I mean they were going after the same teachers. We were doing the same thing. It just seemed a total waste of resources to go it alone only to have the Yugoslavs pit one of us off against the other. So we just pooled our resources, and it worked very well. We would staff seminars together, and if we couldn't get a particular specialist in a field, we could turn to our British colleagues and they were very happy to cooperate. They, too, thought it was a sensible arrangement. So in the end we did a better job, and I think also managed to keep the Yugoslavs a little happier and prevented them from playing one off against the other. We didn't think that was very healthy.

Q: What about you mentioned there wasn't sort of a large just straight English language program. I know in other countries, Italy and elsewhere, we have had these sort of self sustaining English language programs. Was this contemplated? Is there any reason why we didn't have one like that?

MCBRIDE: I think we felt that there were other people doing that who were doing it very well. We felt our resources with respect to English language and teaching were far better used teaching teachers than teaching individuals. We just got a bigger multiplier effect for that. So that was the rationalization for it, and we never really seriously entertained direct English teaching while I was there. Some of the American centers did by allowing local organizations who sponsored teaching come in and use the space. We put little or no resources into it.

Q: How about the libraries? It can get tricky in libraries because you will find books that are not on the A list or something in a communist regime getting into the libraries. Did you have to watch that?

MCBRIDE: Good point, because I am going to jump ahead a bit. That issue was a major problem in my next assignment which was Bucharest. But in Belgrade it was practically a non issue, because the Yugoslavs were able to travel so much. The government, as you remember in those days, guaranteed anybody who applied for a passport very fast service. Yugoslavs were big travelers, so if there was a book that the regime was not interested in, they could go to Italy and buy it, or they could get a friend from London or Paris or America to send it to them. So the book issue was not a very big deal in Yugoslavia. We didn't have any problems. Some people were interested in local books and asked if we had the latest Djilas book. Well, of course we didn't. That was not a sensible thing for us to do. Djilas, although he had a great following in America, was Yugoslav and our whole stock in trade was presenting American writers and American works, and therefore we didn't stock foreign authors. Although much of his stuff, as you know was published first in English before it was published anywhere else.

Q: How about movies? I mean most of it is obviously commercial and I mean the Hollywood bit.

Did you find that Hollywood was helping, hindering or how did you feel about this?

MCBRIDE: Well again because Yugoslavia was a more open society than most in Eastern European or the Balkans in those days, there was no shortage of American films playing in Belgrade. The only problem was that they couldn't pay top dollar, so you didn't get immediate first run films, but there were a lot of American movies shown with subtitles or dubbed. But there was little activity by the embassy mainly because it was an expensive game to get in to. We did a very few sort of invitational showings that we would get mainly with the help of the defense attaché, because they somehow used to get first run films for the staff use. We got some special permission through Jack Valenti to have an exceptional screening sponsored by the ambassador by invitation. We would occasionally show hot new movies. But by and large the film part of our business was very small because it seemed to take care of itself. Now images of America derived from films is a problem in a lot of places, and Yugoslavia was no exception thus you would see one aspect of American culture that was there because it was commercially viable to make films about bad situations that we wouldn't necessarily want to focus on. It was a strictly a commercial venture, and the producers in Hollywood were not fools. They obviously did jobs to make money, and they did. Some of those images were not the ones we were most happy to project, but on the other hand, the freedom of expression was worth a little something in that regard, too, so we didn't get too upset about the film situation. Again as I say, we didn't get too involved either.

Q: We are now talking the year 2000, where Yugoslavia exists no more and is broken up into ethnic groups and we have had I think four wars. We are almost starting the fifth now over the ethnic problem. Did the ethnic divisions play any role in what you were doing?

MCBRIDE: A lot, because there was always the question of balancing interests in the federal government. The Yugoslav government had to reconcile huge differences between the competing republics. So whether it was trying to decide what you were going to do in Sarajevo to keep the Bosnians happy or how you were going to appear not to be overwhelmingly in favor of the more advanced republics, the Coats or the Slovenians, you were always aware of that tension. In several conversations we had with the Yugoslav authorities, they would never admit it publicly, but would discuss it privately. They had very strict instructions in terms of funding, because they were funding partners in many U.S. projects, especially the Fulbright program. That brought with it certain strings. They had to have a certain say in managing projects. Each of the republics had a strong say in the way in things worked. There was always this tension between the republics, particularly those like Bosnia where there was a strong Muslim influence. Those views were often at odds with the more western sophisticated advanced views of a Slovenia, say. So those issues were constantly there. And seeing what has happened now, I think it is tragic what has happened to Yugoslavia. I am very sorry that Yugoslavia has disappeared, but it was all too predictable in many ways. Tito held it together while he was there, but this sort of concept of rotating presidency was bound to give way sooner or later. So all the strife and ethnic conflicts that now are part of contemporary Balkan history were never far from the surface, certainly in the days that I was there. I expect the same with you, maybe more so even; I don't know. It was a great issue all the time, and it was one that you had to be very careful to keep both in focus and in balance because you could go down a very slippery slope very quickly, almost before realizing you were on one.

Q: Well when I was there again, mid-'60s, Tito was very much in power, and I think we were, we somehow thought he was going to create a new generation of Yugoslavs. It is obviously wishful thinking. You know, every time you turn around you are getting hit by this other, by the nationality thing, but I mean Tito was standing up against the Soviet Union. We wished them well. And also I, it was one of these things. My God we know these people. They may have their disputes, but they are not going to go out and kill each other. Which is of course exactly what they did do. I think we felt...

MCBRIDE: I think we certainly felt the same. We were there at a time when the relationship was on a big upswing and things were generally quite positive. You felt that you could do almost anything. To this day I count many Yugoslav friends, not only Serbs but others as well. It was quite difficult in the last few years to talk to them, even the history professor that I alluded to earlier, who was the mainstay of American studies in Yugoslavia, Dragutin Jivoinovich. I saw him a time or two here with some Serbian friends whom we kept up with here. We found after the last encounter that it was very difficult because the whole issue of Serbian nationalism absolutely boiled over. A man who we thought was enlightened and sort of sophisticated, had traveled a great deal, had studied abroad, and had been exposed to many different kinds of cultures and ideas was, in the last analysis, a very rabidly nationalistic Serb. It is hard to imagine now how breathtaking our naivete was in a way. But it doesn't help in any way. It is still a very tragic situation. I am sure that you have followed it, too, but I noticed something quite recently about the Serbian situation that fascinated me. Watching the Lehrer report on television the other night after the arrest of Milosevic, one of the panelists was Dusko Doder who was a former journalist for the Washington Post. As you know he has written a couple of very interesting books about Yugoslavia, and his comment I think, was really insightful. It was not a throwaway, but it was in the middle of a lot of other stuff, and you really had to fish to get it out. What he said in essence was that the Serbs have historically and even up to now confronted their past with great difficulty. And if they don't have some opportunity now after the arrest of Milosevic, then they really need to have this catharsis, to get it all out and come to some terms with their past, and to admit that they were really pretty rotten bastards a lot of the time. If you don't get this out, the healing is going to be awfully difficult. Plotting a sensible course for the future is going to be equally difficult. I am not sure that is very high on the radar screen in Belgrade.

Q: What was the impression you were getting on this about, I mean while you were there Tito was in Power.

MCBRIDE: Very much in power.

Q: But was he getting older?

MCBRIDE: He was and the question of succession was increasingly widely discussed. He had devised as you know, this rotating presidency before he withdrew from the scene. But it was difficult for the Yugoslavs that I talked to, to imagine how this was going to work in fact, because it was Tito who really held the thing together. And if it didn't work he would just grab people and knock their heads together and say, "Goddammit, we have got to do it this way and that is that." He could do that, and it would all work somehow. It didn't because there was no

person of that force or stature to take his place. The succession question was one of the most troublesome for the government. But the government tried to put the best face on it obviously because that is what the person then in power decided would happen, and everybody closed ranks behind him, and that was that.

TERRANCE CATHERMAN
Country Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Yugoslavia (1974-1980)

Terrance Catherman was born in Michigan and attended The University of Michigan in the early 1940's. Afterwards he served in the army until 1950 when he took a position as a State Department Intern. He shifted to The HIGOC were he transitioned into an officer in 1953 in the newly formed USIA. He has served in Washington, Austria, Israel, Germany, Yugoslavia, Poland, and France. This interview was conducted in 1991 by G. Lewis Schmidt.

Q: Lets go on to...Where did you go from Berlin?

CATHERMAN: While I was in Berlin I was assigned as PAO to Yugoslavia and Dottie and I had the great privilege of studying Serbo-Croatian in Berlin. The Minister in Berlin, Dave Klein, found an apartment for us to use for the four months that we studied Serbo-Croatian and we had a very good course at Berlitz in Berlin. In May, 1974 we went to Yugoslavia able to conduct our affairs in Serbo-Croatian and it was really a nice experience.

Q: Who was your immediate predecessor there?

CATHERMAN: Pic Littell. Pic Littell was another guy I followed around.

We spent 5 1/2 years there. The Yugoslav experience was different than any other one I had in that we were in a society overwhelmingly pro-American and overwhelmingly open to people who were interested in the arts and intellectual activities. Dottie's an artist and I was interested in the performing arts as well as the creative arts. Within the matter of a few weeks we established life-long friendships with the best writers, the artists, the poets and some of the journalists. It was not as interesting for me to be with the journalists who were under a great deal of pressure, as it was with the creative arts, the performing artists. It was a very positive experience.

Q: What were the essential parts of your program while you were there?

CATHERMAN: We had five branch offices in Yugoslavia. Our Embassy was located in Belgrade, but we also had information and cultural centers, and Americans running them, in the five provincial capitals. So we ran a full-blown USIS program across the board. There was a quite large academic exchanges program. We had full access to the media, so we had an information program. Although the government didn't by any means agree with what we said, we had access to the press. We had unparalleled personal contact opportunities and I think that was

my big contribution. I simply went with the writers and the creative intellectuals of that country for 5 1/2 years and that was the big thing I did.

Q: Did you notice any intensity in the ethnic differences within the country which has now flared into unfortunately civil war proportions?

CATHERMAN: They were always there. I didn't notice that it was intensified with the single exception of the Kosovo. The Albanians in the Kosovo area were becoming a bigger problem and there were disturbances down there toward the end of my tour. In 1979 there were some killings down there. The Yugoslav army moved in. Things were degrading there, no doubt about it. As far as Croatia and Slovenia were concerned the relations were not good but I did not feel they were degrading while I was there.

Q: You didn't have the intense blow-ups that are now taking place?

CATHERMAN: No, because Tito was still alive. You know the old story about Yugoslavia being a country of five nationalities, four languages, three religions, two alphabets, and one Yugoslav. And that was Tito.

Q: How was the Catholic Church treated in Yugoslavia? Was it pretty free to operate?

CATHERMAN: Croatia was Roman Catholic.

Q: Yeah, I know they were Roman Catholic, but there was a lot of Muslim influence in the country, too.

CATHERMAN: The Muslim influence was essentially in the Kosovo area and in Bosnia--its capital is Sarajevo. Yeah, you had Muslims down there. Actually Muslims were able to practice their religion throughout the country. The Roman Catholic Church was most active in the north--Slovenia and Croatia. It was tolerated in Serbia, but the Serbian Orthodox Church was essentially the church of choice among the Christians in Serbia. And that applied also to Montenegro and Macedonia.

Q: It is not necessarily connected with your professional experience, but what do you guess is going to happen now? Is the country going to fly apart?

CATHERMAN: I think it will, yeah. The Serbs will try to pull the Slovenians back and will probably succeed applying a lot of force. The Yugoslav army is officered essentially by Serbs and there is going to be some violence. I'm not clairvoyant, I don't know how this will spin out. The Slovenians obviously want to become part of Western Europe. They want to get away from the albatross around their neck, the rest of Yugoslavia, since they contribute their lion share of the economic sustenance for Yugoslavia as such. So I think it is going to be very difficult.

Q: The Croatians, of course, are always at swords point with the Serbs.

CATHERMAN: Right.

Q: Your are right, I am afraid that country is going to fly apart.

CATHERMAN: Yeah. We have one major difference now and that is the cold war is over and the Soviet threat is not as powerful as it used to be. So if it does fly apart, from our point of view, it probably would not mean the end of the world. It would have been extremely dangerous for us, the Americans, back in the "60s and "70s when I was there and the Soviets were still considered the enemy.

Q: One final question before we leave Yugoslavia. At the time that I was at the War College we visited Yugoslavia as well as the Soviet Union. At that time I found that the army was probably the most vocal in their condemnation of, and contempt for the Soviet government. Was that universally true, did you find any of that when you were there? Much more so than the civilian population who tended to keep their feelings more quiet in that respect.

CATHERMAN: That is a tough question. The Yugoslavs, including the army, were very careful while I was there not to irritate the Soviets overly. As long as the Soviets in Yugoslavia behaved, the Yugoslavs would rather have tolerated them and not create or allow tension to develop. I didn't have all that much experience with the army, but I did meet a lot of officers. Certainly from the civilian component the attempt was not to play up the tensions between the Soviets and the Yugoslavs. The tensions were certainly there, but we tended to hear of them from intelligence sources rather than from on-the-street conversations. Of course, we knew what the Soviets were trying to do. They were certainly, I would say, brutal in their treatment of the Yugoslavs. They were doing what they could to subvert the economy and the society and I think in some respects they were somewhat successful.

Q: I suppose the reason why the military were as outspoken as they were was because we were the War College group and they didn't necessarily distinguish between those of us who were officers in the military and those of us who were civilians. They thought they were dealing with essentially an American military oriented group, and I suppose that was the reason they were more vocal.

CATHERMAN: You were there in an earlier and much tougher time, during the cold war.

Q: This was in 1960 when I was there.

CATHERMAN: Right, exactly. That was a tough period. It was a period when the Yugoslavs had not firmly established that they had pulled away from the Soviet Union. They were still working on it. By the mid "70s, when I went there, that was pretty well established. Not that the Soviets were not trying to subvert the Yugoslavs, but they did not pose the massive threat that they had posed when you were there in 1960.

MARK PALMER
Political Counselor

Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1975-1978)

Mark Palmer was born in 1941 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He graduated from Yale in 1963 with a degree in Russian Area Studies. Mr. Palmer entered the Foreign Service in 1964. During his service he has been stationed in New Delhi, Garmisch, Moscow, Belgrade, and was Ambassador to Hungary. He has also held numerous positions within the State Department. He was interviewed in 1997 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Belgrade from when to when?

PALMER: From '75 to '78.

Q: How did this assignment come about?

PALMER: I was concerned that I was going to be a speech writer for the rest of my life. I had been for Rogers and then for Kissinger and I felt that it was time to go overseas. Lawrence Eagleburger had served in Yugoslavia. He basically controlled assignments to a substantial extent in the department. I asked him if he would help me to go there. After a little bit of hesitation about having to face Kissinger over this issue, he agreed. So I was sent off. My major interest was Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union anyway. So it was a logical place to go.

Q: When you arrived there, how would you describe in 1975 the situation in Yugoslavia?

PALMER: Well, Tito had been in power for a long time at that point. I think everybody had kind of settled into thinking pretty much that Yugoslavia was stable and that he was enduring. So it was not a place where rapid change was expected. People were constantly doing the death watch. That is, how long Tito personally was going to survive.

Q: We're talking about since the end of the war. We're talking about 30 years at this point.

PALMER: Right. But he was still strong, politically invincible and had all of his palaces and wore white uniforms and did his thing. He was a very strong leader and had managed to bring together all of these peoples into a not always happy union. There had been, just before I arrived there - I think it was in '71 - Croatians within the communist Party had exercised their kind of independent spirit and desire to have some more autonomy. So that there were stresses and strains within the Communist Party as well as more generally.

Tito had at that time a higher per capita prison population of political prisoners than the Soviet Union. People in the building I lived in (a building with Yugoslavs, not an embassy building), middle class professional Yugoslavs, were extremely nervous about even the most modest political conversations. So, although we rather favored Yugoslavia and Tito because of his foreign policy and nonaligned status, as opposed to being a member of the Warsaw Pact; nonetheless, it was a dictatorship in a full blooded way.

Q: Were we beginning to feel uncomfortable with this political imprisonment and all that? How

did that sit with you when you first arrived?

PALMER: Well, for me personally, it didn't sit well at all. As I'd mentioned before, I joined the Foreign Service out of the civil rights movement. I felt very strongly that, whether it was a communist dictatorship or a Saudi dictatorship, in my judgment, American foreign policy should be getting rid of these dictatorships.

Then, my ambassador when I arrived had formerly been deputy attorney general. He was a conservative Republican, Laurence Silberman, was very anti-communist. He was very much determined to keep a spotlight on these issues. And in addition to that, I remember Bob Dole coming out at one point to help us get a political prisoner out of jail.

Q: You talk about when an American got into trouble. I wonder if you'd talk about this. I remember reading about this. Normally, I took the normal Foreign Service line. This guy Silberman, from what I heard, was sort of a bull in the china shop. He might start the wrong war at the wrong time.

But at the same time, as former chief of the consular section and as a good consular officer, I thought, "By God, he's 'right on' in trying to defend an American." Too often, it's too easy for people at the top, for political considerations, to say, "We don't want to upset. We don't want to do this." And I thought he was dead right. So I wonder if you could talk about this and what you thought?

PALMER: Well, I thought that Larry Silberman did exactly the right thing, all the way up until the end. That is, I also had been a consular officer and I also felt very strongly. When somebody gets put in jail and threatened the way this guy was, you go and fight for him. This is particularly so if it's fairly clear that the basis for his problem was wrong. He had <u>not</u> done anything wrong.

Q: Do you remember the circumstance and could you explain it?

PALMER: Yes. He had been taking pictures in a sugar beet factory. He had permission to do this. He was offering to bring in new technology, sugar beet technology. It was a cooperative economic endeavor, but there were some tensions. He was a rich guy. I've forgotten the name of the town where this was, but it was a smallish town. Some of the local people there resented him, because he was a guy who'd left; made good in the United States, and made a lot of money. He'd come back and they thought he was sort of showing off. So there was this kind of resentment. Plus, the local Commies were kind of thugs.

So they claimed he was doing industrial espionage in this sugar beet factory. I mean really ludicrous, and implied more than just industrial espionage. But he had permission in writing to take these photos of this antiquated sugar beet stuff.

So we bombarded the foreign ministry, etc. We did a lot to bring pressure, got Washington to raise it. We did a lot, and I think Silberman did everything exactly right. Until we got Tito to finally agree to let the guy go, which we did.

And at that point Larry, unbeknownst to me… the ambassador did not tell me he was doing this. If he'd told me, I would have opposed it strongly. But that's probably why he didn't tell me. He went out to the airport to see the guy off. Fine. But then he held a kind of press conference there at the airport. And that he should not have done.

Q: No.

PALMER: Because Tito had made this - grudgingly - but had made this gesture. It was clear that it was Tito who had personally done it. We should have just swallowed it. Instead of that he, Larry, kind of crowed; Tito took personal offense; and that was the beginning of the end.

He was more or less persona non grata after that in Yugoslavia. The foreign ministry made clear to me that they would not deal with him any more. They just wouldn't.

And if Larry hadn't had a rather complex situation in Washington - including some people who didn't want him back in Washington, and others who strongly supported him - if that hadn't been, then he would have been withdrawn. Because he really couldn't function normally from that time on. He could not go have some appointments. I was the one who had some of the appointments. We had a new DCM. at that point.

And I did, by the way, tell him. As soon as he got back from the airport, I told him. He told me what he'd done, and I said, "For God's sakes, why did you do that!?" And then we went into what we went into.

Q: How did you deal with the officers in the political section, and maybe others? You have a difficult ambassador, and you're trying to have a functioning embassy. You're trying to function. You know, the job has to get done and people have to work together. Can you talk about any problems or how you dealt with this?

PALMER: Well, it isn't easy. On the one side, he is the ambassador in a democracy. You know, I feel strongly that the Foreign Service has two obligations. One is to tell a political appointee exactly what you think, without lacquering it. And second, you have an absolute obligation to support him outside the embassy.

And vis-à-vis the staff, you have to constantly be reminding them of those dual obligations: "Don't be intimidated by him." In fact, Larry loved to fight. He loved arguing. And one thing that drove him crazy was that he felt he wasn't getting it from the staff. That he wasn't getting intellectual interchange, that they'd just sort of cringe. He could see that they didn't agree, but they wouldn't engage.

Q: Well, I think it's the type of personality. I mean you see somebody who sort of grows up in the law enforcement atmosphere, being a lawyer, you know. And then the Foreign Service really is different. I mean a real battle is raging. It's easy not to miss the fact that you're in the midst of a red hot battle between two people.

PALMER: I think that we, among ourselves in the Foreign Service, do talk a lot about issues.

But sometimes they're hesitant to take on a political appointee.

Q: Yes.

PALMER: Sometimes. But there are many Foreign Service officers, many who do. And they are the best of the Foreign Service. They are the ones in my opinion who go the furthest.

Q: Well, I assume that, as with every team that's in Yugoslavia, you're always watching the fractures. When I was there, there was no such thing as a Bosnian fracture. It was Croatia and Albania. Albania wasn't a big deal.

PALMER: No, that's right. I went to Sarajevo a number of times. Vic Yakovitch was the USIA officer, head of our USIA post there. No, the general assumption was that - it was some kind of miracle, but actually - Bosnia -Herzegovina was pulling together better than Croatia-Serbia. There was more Croatia-Serbia worry and more Albanian worry.

WADE MATTHEWS
Inspection Corps, State Department
Washington, DC (1987-1992)

Wade Matthews was born in North Carolina in 1933. He attended the University of North Carolina and received a bachelor's degree in zoology in 1954. After graduation he joined the army and then went into Law school before joining the Foreign Service in 1957. He has served in Trinidad and Tobago, Peru, Brazil, Germany, Mozambique, Guyana, Ecuador and Chile during his service career. He was interviewed in 1991 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Well, normally this would be the end. Wade, you did go and act as a monitor for an election in Bosnia? Could you explain the background of this and what you observed? This is still in the realm of foreign affairs and foreign experience.

MATTHEWS: Well, I just returned a couple of weeks ago from Bosnia. I was there actually as what they call an election supervisor rather than monitor per se. There were some monitors, about 40-50 I think from various OSCE countries. Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe was the organization that paid my per diem while I was in the country to the sum of $95 a day out of which I had to pay all of my expenses. I think they also paid our in country transportation expenses while the Department of State paid our air transportation until we got to Zagreb, Croatia. We processed in, in a couple of hours and got some ID cards and were put on a bus and took off to, in my case, Tuzla, which is the third largest city in Bosnia, and a predominantly Muslim city. Our purpose while we were there was to supervise each and every precinct in the country. There were 300+ Americans, I don't remember, about 360-370, and there were about 22-2300 people from the various OSCE countries. Probably our American contingent was as large as those from any other country. There were a lot of French and Brits and Germans there. I think people from Turkestan were there and Kazakstan some of the ex-Soviet Union

countries. Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, the members of it are every European country including Turkey, including San Marino, including Monaco, what have you with the exception of Andorra. The sheepherders of Andorra didn't decide to join. This came out of the old Helsinki conference and the members also included the United States and Canada and all the republics that have come out of the Soviet Union including Russia. They are all members of it. Basically it is sort of the whole northern part of the Northern Hemisphere and dipping down reasonably far south in a few cases. That was the organization. The reason we were there was to lend legitimacy to the municipal elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There were two parts of it. The federation which is Croat and Muslim and the one which by definition is Serb. The election was held in all the parties. There were numerous parties, parties, coalitions what have you on the ballot. On my ballot there were 15 different parties or coalitions. There were very complex electoral procedures, extremely complex. Partly because it was a complex situation. You didn't just go to your precinct and vote; you had the right to go to where you once had lived but were driven out of by fear or ethnic cleansing to things of that nature and vote in that precinct. You were trucked there or bussed there by busses paid for by the OSCE, in some cases accompanied by stabilization force military personnel. And you could go to a so called absentee voting station and vote maybe 200 miles away or even out of the country even in Croatia or Yugoslavia in the place where you once lived. Then all these ballots had to be counted, safeguarded, had to be double counted to make sure there was no suspicion of fraud. One copy of all the ballots had to be trucked in to Sarajevo, fed into computers, and the process is still not over. I was just by the Bosnia desk today, the Bosnia task force, and they have relatively few of the results from the OSCE because they are still counting, comparing. If this multiple copies of the list has any meaning, they have to be then compared. If the central counting authority in Sarajevo got one set of figures and if the count at the precinct at the evening of the second day of balloting showed something else, and there is a discrepancy, what. What was the discrepancy? How did it come about? Who is pulling the hanky-panky on whom? Was there some mechanical error that should be corrected and so on. So it was a very complex process. We heard that this is supposed to be the most expensive election on a vote per cast basis in history. I am not talking about the electoral campaign; I am talking about the electoral process itself. I suspect they are right. If I were an inspector I would recommend a lot of things. One, you could compress the time considerably. We had to have some training before the election. We had to have some time to debrief afterwards, but we were there a shade over two weeks. You could do the whole thing in a shade over one week and have you in and out of there at considerably less expense, less cost. On Bosnia-Herzegovina I would say the security problems are probably exaggerated. As long as you have some stabilization force there, I don't think you are going to have a major event there, I don't think warfare is going to break out, and I don't think we need the roughly 400,000 that are there now. But you do need some, and I would say you are going to have to have some for some time, much longer than President Clinton would like with the intention of pulling people out next summer. If you pulled everybody out next summer after having an overly large security force there now and you pull out so that you have nobody there except a few police, I think that would be very hazardous. I don't think necessarily from the Serbs. I think the biggest danger now is from the Muslims who are strengthening their military operation. I think if everybody got away, they would try and attack the Serb positions. I think they could defeat the Serbs with no great problem, but what happens with most of your Serbs who are sitting right across a river or right across a border in some cases not all that well marked. I know a river in what is now Yugoslavia, the old Yugoslav army, would they sit by and let the Muslims drive all the Serbs out of Bosnia? I

don't think so. I don't think the Croat forces would sit by if the Muslim forces started in on the Croats as well. If you get those two forces involved, the Muslim forces may have improved a lot, but it hasn't improved enough to face those two enemies. So, you have the whole Yugoslavia blowing up or a goodly part of it at least blowing up again. That is the dilemma.

Q: Did you have any personal experiences while you were watching the voting?

MATTHEWS: No, my election committee, who I paid incidentally. I had to pay them at the end of the counting, everybody including the chairman. Not a princely amount, 150 marks for two days of very hard work by the chairman and 100 marks for each of the six members of the election committee, all of whom had a job. One would stand at the door and sort of control the line which never got too long and check each individual to make sure that he didn't have the iridescent ink on his finger which showed under a black light. Then the voter would go and present his identification and have his identification checked. There were 12 different kinds of identification that were valid. Then you had to go over and sign the register and have his name checked against the name in the register. If his name wasn't in the register, there was another procedure, another form to fill out. He cast what was called a tentative ballot which would be evaluated later. Then he went over and got instructions on how to mark the ballot, was handed the ballot. Somebody sprayed the little iridescent ink on his finger. Then he went over an put it in the ballot box, Oh I'm sorry, then he went over and marked the ballot in a secret sort of cardboard booth that was set up where nobody could see him. Then he went over and folded it and put it in the ballot box, and then walked out. That was the procedure. We had anywhere depending on the time of day from three to ten political party observers who were sitting over at another table watching this whole procedure and also watched the counting of many of them. We had television people coming in, radio people, news people coming in to record this great event, and it was interesting. I had an interpreter since I don't speak Serbo-Croatian. Most of the monitors did not speak Serbo-Croatian, and where ever they were from, whether they were Germans, French, what have you, they had to have English as their language. Any who did not speak Serbo-Croatian were assigned an interpreter, and most did not speak. The only exceptions were the Kazakhs or the Tajiks one or the other. They apparently couldn't find enough in their contingent of nine there, and I talked with the director of this northern part of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the OSCE elections force there. He said finally he found something to do with his reserve force. His reserves were the Kazakhs and the Tajiks and they were going to send them up to some polling stations where they had some real problems without interpreters because they spoke Russian, of course, and the Serbs could understand enough Russian so they could communicate. So that was basically it. It was an interesting experience. I was just asked today if I would like to go back for the elections in November. I told this officer no, not in November for two reasons, I'm too tied up and, even if this climate and conditions were fine, I could not. It gets cold in Bosnia.

Q: Oh, yes. The wind comes down the plain and starts hitting those mountains. Okay, Wade, we'll stop at this point. I thank you very much.

MATTHEWS: I enjoyed it.

MARGARET D. TUTWILER
Spokesperson, State Department
Washington, DC (1989)

Margaret Tutwiler was born in Birmingham, Alabama in 1950. She attended the University of Alabama and graduated in 1973 with a degree in political science. She began work for the Republican Party in Alabama in 1974. Her career with the Republican Party led to many positions within the US Government. She was interviewed on May 4, 1999 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Let's talk about Bosnia and Yugoslavia.

TUTWILER: I don't remember how many days before the war broke out that there was a lot of back and forth inside the State Department, the NSC and White House about whether Secretary Baker should go to Yugoslavia or not. It was finally determined that he should and he would meet with the presidents of the six republics within Yugoslavia. He met with each one in different parts of a building like our Congress building, including Milosevic. At the end of that day, we had a dinner in the same building, I believe. I remember sitting there at this beautiful formal dinner and thinking, "These people are getting ready to go to war and we are sitting here at a very elegant, formal governmental dinner." I just found it surreal. I also found each one of those leaders incredibly stubborn. They were all rigidly locked into whatever their positions were. Baker was criticized for even going or not doing more. His message basically to all of them was whatever you are going to do make sure that your transition, if that is what you want, is handled peacefully. You don't go out taking other peoples' borders or post offices and doing things that are going to precipitate war. These people, as far as I was concerned, no more were ready to listen then fly to the moon. I disagree with the criticism of his going there. I thought it was the right thing to do. The United States went in there in the person of Jim Baker and said, "Here is how you should handle this. We don't need a war in the heart of Europe, etc." But they were not going to listen. Then we sat down to this really very elegant eight course meal with crystal and chandeliers and I remember thinking this was not the picture I would have pictured before going to war. Entertaining as if nothing was going on. And, that is how all of them acted.

Q: You say you came away realizing what the problem was, that these guys were nuts. I have to say I served five years in Belgrade way back and when you are talking about the Balkans this is a mindset that you need a lot of exposure to.

TUTWILER: It is unbelievable.

Q: Yes, it really is.

TUTWILER: But the Bush administration also had the advantage of having Secretary Baker's deputy, Larry Eagleburger. Larry knew these people. He had firsthand knowledge of Yugoslav politics. So, it wasn't as if we didn't have any working knowledge of this. But, it was President Bush's view, and I think a correct view, that we just led a world coalition in a very successful military operation of 54 nations to do what we said we were going to do, eject Saddam Hussein

from Kuwait. Europe, this is in your backyard, you all get your act together and you lead on this one. And, of course, they are incapable of doing it.

Q: Was there the feeling that maybe the Europeans- (End of tape)

TUTWILER: Look at all the different people who make up NATO or make up the CSCE. They all have hundreds of years old histories that they today still have loyalties to. That would manifest itself in bilateral meetings and it would manifest itself in multilateral meetings. You sit there and think the Yugoslavs are crazy. I would sit there as someone who is not steeped in foreign policy and listen, for instance, to the new foreign minister in Germany, or the foreign minister in France or the foreign minister in Greece and I couldn't believe what I was hearing. It was just bizarre to me. Here we have a people slaughtering each other but yet you are still protecting what ever allegiance you historically, traditionally had in your country. Why? I get back to domestic politics. That is what their track record has been. So, all the Croats were horrible or all the Serbs were horrible. It was bizarre to me

Q: The Croats and the Germans and the Greeks and the Serbs.

TUTWILER: But, they are still locked into those molds. Even the "civilized" powerful western countries were still in many respects locked in those 400 year-old things that happened. You wonder why these Yugoslavs couldn't get it together. Larry Eagleburger used to say there are no boy scouts here, inside Yugoslavia. And there weren't.

Q: In Kosovo we got the Serbs out but now the Kosovans are killing the Serbs.

TUTWILER: It is really bizarre. The only reason I believe that Western Europe and the United States honestly ever got involved is for the fear of history repeating itself, the last two world wars were started in the Balkans. If there had not been that equation in peoples minds on the table, I don't think anybody would be there. I really don't. Just let them finish it off and whoever wins, wins. That sounds cold hearted, but there are places in the world today where wars are going on where there is no national U.S. vital security interest. There is not a trigger that is in our minds, in our memories, of what happened if you didn't get in there and somehow they get tired of killing each other. Larry used to say when they get tired of killing each other that is when this is going to stop.

Q: *Probably that is what happened in Bosnia. We came in but after things were pretty well settled. Talking about nations, how about the French? The French have always been the burr under the American foreign policy saddle on just about everything, although when the chips are down they are usually with us in important event. Did you have people who never referred to the French as the French but as those God damn French?*

TUTWILER: Yes, the French were very difficult especially on Secretary Baker in multilateral meetings and on some very contentious issues. But, I will also say in the buildup to the Gulf War, the last person we needed was President Mitterrand, to get his support. It was very critical at that time that France in the person of Mitterrand say yes we will be there. Secretary Baker met with Mitterrand in a very small meeting in Mitterrand's office. Tom Niles, Kimmitt, was there

but I don't remember the other Americans who were present. Baker did his brief from President Bush and Mitterrand did his little speech. He had one sentence in there in the translation when we heard it which basically said, "I'm there." His efforts had extended over months. I remember the relief of Secretary Baker and the U.S. delegation. Mitterrand did the right thing. He had been saying give peace a chance and all the other stuff, but when it got to crunch time he was there. It was a real turning point, not in the war or anything else, but it was very important. Yes, they were difficult but Baker and Roland Dumas, who was the foreign minister at the time, got along fine. They would definitely have their disagreements, and I can't remember what they were. But on really, really important things, yes, the French were there.

ROBERT RACKMALES
Deputy Chief of Mission
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1989-1993)

Robert Rackmales was born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1937. He studied history at Johns Hopkins University and graduated in 1958. He received a Fulbright Scholarship to Germany and this influenced him toward his entry into the Foreign Service in 1963. He had twice served in Nigeria, Yugoslavia and Italy at various rotations. He was interviewed by Professor Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 11, 1995.

Q: *On the political reporting, were we in touch with the governments of the various republics, and if so what were we getting from them? What were they talking about?*

RACKMALES: There were three groups of republics. On the one hand there was Slovenia and Croatia who at that point were starting to head hell-bent towards independence at the earliest possible date. There were the first free and open elections took place in Slovenia and Croatia in the spring of '90, and both brought into power groups that were clearly headed in the direction of independence. Even before those elections it was clear that that's the way things were trending, but the elections intensified that process.

Anyway, you had those two northern republics. You had Serbia which basically would have liked to have been rid of the northern republics, felt strong enough to dominate the remainder, and so was not about to pay a price to keep the country together.

And then you had the other republics who basically were terrified of what a breakup would mean, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Montenegro. Montenegro was too much in Serbia's shadow to really do much more than wring its hands. But the two leaders who worked the hardest to try to keep a form of Yugoslavia together were Izetbegovic in Bosnia who was elected in November of '90, and Gligorov who became the leader of Macedonia in '91. Unity became more difficult to maintain with the demise of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia which formally broke up in February of '90. Its power crumbled very rapidly, but the underlying interests of the republics at that period were more or less as I've described it, namely two who only wanted to leave. One which was somewhat happy to have them leave provided in the case of Croatia that they didn't

try to take Serbs with them. The Yugoslav constitution provided for secession but not secession of republics. Secession of ethnic groups, of nations as they called it, narodi. The Serbian argument was if Slovenes as a nation wished to leave Yugoslavia it's in the constitution that they have that right. If Croats want to leave, essentially as Croats, that's fine. But, and this becomes now one of the root causes of the wars that sprung up, that they do not have a right to take Serbs with them. The Serbs have the same right of self determination as anyone else. That in a nutshell was the Serbian position.

Q: *Did the embassy try to do anything with Tudjman and Milosevic?*

RACKMALES: Well, the problem was not that Tudjman and Milosevic were not getting together. The problem was that they were getting together. In a secret meeting that we only found out about subsequently they met in Serbia and agreed to divide Bosnia between Serbia and Croatia. We confronted both men with this. They made somewhat halfhearted denials that they did anything like that. But the information was pretty solid, and reliable, and nothing that happened subsequently would lead me to question whether the reports we got of that meeting were not accurate. My feeling was that each played off and benefited from the other, so each would have been dismayed had the other been replaced by someone else. I mean, for Tudjman, Milosevic was the ideal leader of Serbia. He was viewed as a communist which made Tudjman look good by comparison. He could portray him as the bogey man, and used that to discredit attempts to deal with in a serious way the grievances of the Serbs--how can you deal with these Bolsheviks, and that sort of thing?

At the same time Tudjman felt he could deal with Milosevic on issues like Bosnia. It was kind of the equivalent of the Nazi-Soviet pact over Poland really, they quietly agreed to divide it up. And from Milosevic's standpoint it was kind of the same thing. Tudjman delighted in evoking memories of Croatia's unsavory past and his anti-Semitism and authoritarianism made him unpalatable to many. So each one was a polarizing figure for the other side. At the same time I think Milosevic felt some contempt for Tudjman, and felt that he could wrap him around his finger whenever the two of them did get together. I remember a west European diplomat who had traveled back with Milosevic and the army leadership from one of the series of meetings that were arranged by the European community among the presidents of the different republics, and he said that Milosevic was being very open about how stupid he thought Tudjman was, and how he had completely fooled him in these talks that they had just had. And he and the army leaders were laughing about Tudjman, they had very little regard for his intelligence or abilities. I must add, though, that in Bosnia, Tudjman played his hand more shrewdly than Milosevic, avoiding sanctions while pursuing essentially identical policies.

Q: *Before this thing really blew up were we sending out our people around the country and to find out whose doing what to whom? What sort of reports were we getting?*

RACKMALES: Both we and Zagreb were sending people into some of the areas which seemed to be flashpoints, into the Krajina area, for example. The consulate general did an excellent report. We sent people a number of times into Bosnia. The problem with reporting isn't that we didn't go out, is that it was hard to really get at the areas where some of the worst problems were happening, which were not in the larger cities. In other words, we had a pretty good take on

Banja Luka, Mostar, Sarajevo obviously. But if I had to assess the overall performance, it's that we didn't get enough of a sense of the village level realities, because it's hard both in terms of time, in terms of communicating with peasants who just aren't used to talking to foreigners. If you went to a city you can find a lot of people who were interlocutors. The extent to which the conflict became an urban-rural conflict is described by Misha Glenny in his book, which I think is the best...

Q: *What's its title?*

RACKMALES: The Failure of Yugoslavia. It starts off at the very beginning saying that Tudjman himself missed that reality, he was relying on what he heard from Serbs in Zagreb who were not in touch at all with Serbs who were down in villages in the Krajina, that he was simply out of touch with that reality. I think that was largely true of the diplomatic missions as well. You tend to talk to people who are more accessible. For example, the majority of the Serbs who lived in the larger cities, and tended to be the more articulate, and who tended to be the ones that western diplomats would talk to, would say reassuring things, things that would give you a more optimistic view of what things

Q: *You were there from '89 until '93, Kosovo never really blew up.*

RACKMALES: That's right. There were a couple of tense moments and a few fatalities. Had those happened a few years earlier it would have been more dangerous. As we went from '90, which may have been the point of maximum danger, as we went into '91 and '92 and '93, some might have predicted that as fighting was taking place, violence was happening elsewhere, that Kosovo would have gotten more dangerous. In fact, it got less dangerous. My last visit to Kosovo, which I think was in April of 1993, there was less police presence, you saw almost no policemen. Whereas the first time I had gone there on every block you had two Serbs with machine guns walking around. And I think that's one of the ironies, one of the paradoxes, of the whole series of crises in that area is that the explosion of violence in Bosnia had the effect, I think, of sobering the Kosovo Albanians. The other factor that I think has dampened tensions is that, while in every formal respect Kosovo is still a colony in terms of the formal power structure, the Serbs have tolerated a parallel Albanian structure, including schools, hospitals. Basically there is a functioning, even though it is illegal, Albanian government there, and the Albanian community goes about most of its business, including a very thriving involvement in smuggling. You see a lot of BMWs driving around, and they're not being driven by Serbs for the most part. So Kosovo which we looked to as the most likely flashpoint in 1989 is now maybe the least likely flashpoint as of today.

Q: *Let's turn to sort of the west. I'll let you tackle it however you want.*

RACKMALES: Okay. Let me organize it by using as a focal point the visit of Jim Baker, Secretary of State, in June of 1991 because that was the critical period from May-June '91 through probably the fall of '91, the key decisions were taken by everybody that led to the explosion of violence, first in Slovenia-Croatia, and then later in Bosnia. First of all, he came not just as the Secretary of State of the United States. This was a period in mid-1991, and we as an embassy had been working towards this, and it reflected, I think, the high degree of cooperation

that existed among the missions. Everybody was beginning even as late as I would say mid-'90, in some cases towards the end of '90, some major embassies were still pooh-poohing the idea that a breakup was imminent, or that if it happened, that it couldn't be handled in a fairly peaceful way. I think we were the least complacent of the embassies, but our views were pretty closely shared by the major west European embassies. So when Baker scheduled his first trip to Yugoslavia, it was one of the last times that we and the Europeans were on the same wavelength. And the policy was to send the following signals: was first of all to the Slovenes and the Croats who had announced that they were about to declare their independence unilaterally, and damn the consequences of that. The message was, that we would not support unilateral steps to break up Yugoslavia. That they needed to try to come up with a political solution, and preserve some form of Yugoslavia. If that was not viable, then they had to still continue to talk until an agreed dissolution could be achieved. That was the first part of the message, and that was aimed primarily at the Slovenes and the Croats.

The other message was addressed to the army and to the Serbs, was; you must not use force to keep Yugoslavia together. I think in those two messages, there was a contradiction that has bedeviled us all along and the contradiction is the following:

That it was not fully appreciated that except for Slovenia, all of the successor states to Yugoslavia were also multi-ethnic states. Bosnia was in the worst position because there was not even a majority ethnic group. So if you are let's say a Serbian senior military officer what you're hearing from the west is that we don't think that a multi-ethnic state should use force against a minority that wants to break away and form its own state. What would go through his mind is fine, if Croats want to leave Yugoslavia, the Yugoslavia constitution gives them the right as Croats. What it does not do is give them the right to take Serbs with them against their will. The Serbs have the same right not to be part of Croatia as the Croats not to be part of Yugoslavia. The underlying question, when is it justified for the international community to provide arms or other support to a multi-ethnic state facing a minority insurgency, is one of the most vexed of our times. But the foundations of our policy as it emerged vis-a-vis Croatia and Bosnia were shakier than we liked to admit. It helps explain why so many statesmen have been struggling with this. There are other aspects of it obviously but it's one that has never been resolved, and that may only be resolved when finally sadly, tragically, as a result of the war populations are moved so that new boundaries can be drawn and everyone throws up their hands and says okay.

Q: *On the mission, you became Charge at that point?*

RACKMALES: I happened to be at the time of that particular conference because, although Warren was still ambassador, he was away at that time. I did not become the permanent Charge until May of 1992.

Let me just wrap this segment up by saying one word about our coordination, or lack thereof with our European friends. I mean the hostility, the backbiting that erupted between the Germans and the other Europeans over the issue of recognition of Slovenia and Croatia was very damaging to the European Community. I felt that one of our greatest risks was of allowing this to do the same between us and the Europeans. We haven't avoided that entirely, particularly when Clinton was forced to unilaterally announce that we would not observe, or monitor, the arms

embargo, when we unilaterally withdrew our ships. I thought that was terribly misguided. activity. Anyway, we seem at the moment to be back in a bit more cooperative relation with the Europeans but throughout this we've been dogged by the fact that, I guess for political reasons, we feel the necessity to criticize the activity of allies who are carrying out United Nations' mandates that we in many cases pressed, as far as I know, nothing that's happening on the part of any of the UN agencies in Bosnia is happening against, or in contradiction to the series of United Nations security council resolutions. All of which we either drafted or played an important hand in shaping. It's unfortunate, I think, that we have sometimes taken the easy way out, and tried to point the finger at allies who are taking a disproportionate share in Bosnia of casualties and expense and risk.

Q: *This election was when?*

RACKMALES: The Croatian election would have been April of '90, and the same pattern emerged that we saw even more strongly in Bosnia later that year, and which was very ominous, namely that when you introduced democracy and multi-party systems, you were fragmenting society on ethnic lines. You had a polarization around the parties that appealed to one ethnic group, and that was certainly true of the HDZ, and it was certainly true of the Serbian party that ran in the Krajina. And in Bosnia, where of course Izetbegovic and his people have to support a multi-ethnic Bosnia, but that was not the campaign they ran in 1990. Their party was actually in ferment allied with Karadzic's party. Oddly enough people forget that.

Q: *Karadzic being the Serbian, the Bosnia-Serbian leader. They are certainly enemies at this point.*

RACKMALES: That's right. All three of the ethnically based parties in the Bosnian elections ran, if not exactly joint campaigns, that agreed among themselves, listen, we won't attack each other, what we will attack are these multi-ethnic parties because Markovic, the federal prime minister, had encouraged the growth, and even announced something called an alliance of reformed forces that he hoped would galvanize western oriented economic reform based on political parties. So he was working in Bosnia with intellectuals and others who shared those values. Well, all of those parties did miserably. They were attacked by the nationalist parties who did not attack each other. So it's one of the many tragedies and ironies of this whole situation.

Q: *And to a certain extent it helps justify the feeling that they asked for it, and let's not get into the middle of this.*

RACKMALES: That's right. It raises again this issue that I mentioned of the double standard. When Jimmy Carter went last year in a rather forlorn, and I think misguided effort to try to bring about a more stable peace, if you remember he met with all the parties, and he made one public statement for which he was roundly criticized, namely that he thinks the Serbian position is not widely understood. But he's right. The Serbian position has...and I'm obviously not talking about Serbian atrocities but the political basis for the Serbian argument which was that the Bosnian constitution, which stated at that point that no important decisions could be taken except by consensus among the three national groups. That principle has now been reinstated in the Dayton accords. It's because of Bosnia's unique status where there is no majority group. That was the one

thing that set Bosnia off from all the others. All of them except Slovenia were multi-ethnic, but in all of them except Bosnia there was one group that had 60% or more of the population. In Bosnia the Muslims had about 43, the Serbs had about 34 roughly, and the Croats had the rest. The Bosnian constitution had said that no major national decisions can be taken except by a consensus of the three groups. So when the Serbs said, hey, wait a minute, what is more important than a decision to leave one country and declare independence. And it kind of got brushed aside by the international community. But their argument deserves more consideration, I think, than its gotten.

Q: *How about the intra-embassy situation in Belgrade during this time? Did you begin to sense differing views. Particularly I'm thinking of the Germans more than anyone else.*

RACKMALES: No, the Germans were arguing basically the same things we were. The problem is that their government was not paying much attention, they were in fact going their own way to the great distress of the German embassy. Its been reported now widely that not only the German embassy in Belgrade, but the German foreign ministry at the most senior professional levels tried desperately to get Genscher and Kohl off of their premature recognition kick.

Q: *When this happened what was the analysis from our embassy when Germany made...when was it?*

RACKMALES: I talked to Vance about the German push for early recognition. He knew Genscher pretty well, and he said I don't know why he's doing this. I can't talk to him about it; he's totally closed off. Vance was deeply distressed when the Germans and other Europeans announced their plans to recognize Slovenia and Croatia, and then was even more distressed, and Warren and I were the ones who actually broke the news to him, that the United States and the Europeans were going to recognize Bosnia. He literally turned pale, and shook his head and said, there's going to be terrible tragedy as the result of this. He had argued as forcefully as he could against recognition because it undercut his role as a negotiator because recognition was the one thing that...

Q: *Recognition of Croatia?*

RACKMALES: That's right, Slovenia and Croatia. It was the strongest lever that the west had to help try bring about a peaceful solution.

Q: *I was wondering with the German recognition of Croatia, particularly of Croatia...I'd come from Yugoslavia in an early era and had not had to deal with the problems you had, but one is certainly aware of the unholy alliance between Nazi Germany and Croatia during the war that every Serb remembers, that was mother's milk, and no matter what the other problems were, this one must have set off every nerve jangling, didn't it?*

RACKMALES: Oh, absolutely. Many Americans would make fun of what seemed to us exaggerated Serbian fears of Germany, and yet I believe the Serbs were not just blowing smoke. Although their fears in an objective sense were exaggerated, popular feeling was genuine. Also, the credibility of the European community was shattered. The European community was getting

whiplashed between Germany in the north who had their own policy toward Croatia and Slovenia and were not about to go with the consensus that the British and French were trying to build and the Greeks in the south, who had special interests in Macedonia. The Greeks were able to block any sensible policy not only on the part of the European community, but on the part of the United States which is hampered by the clout of the Greek lobby and the Greek members of Congress.

In 1991 the European community gave to a group of wisemen called the Badinter Commission, now mostly forgotten, the task of setting guidelines for what criteria should be used on which to base decisions to recognize successor states to the former Yugoslavia. I think they did an excellent job. Under their criteria Slovenia easily met the criteria. No big human rights problems, overwhelming consensus on the part of the population. They gave a kind of green light. The next state which came close to meeting the criteria was Macedonia. Macedonia because the two major communities, the Macedonians and the Albanians, were both involved in the parliament. The Albanians took part in political life, and both groups basically supported independence. The Albanians had some grievances but these are being addressed to a greater or lesser extent. So Macedonia would have been the next country. Well Macedonia is still unrecognized because of Greek objections over the name which helps destabilize that area.

Croatia did not meet the recognition criteria because of what the commission felt were serious human rights concerns, and the fact that a major component of the population, the Serbian minority, had justified fears of their equality within the state. The Croatian constitution was the only one that explicitly said, this is a country of the Croatian people, and there are also some other nationalities who live here as well. It's not very reassuring if you're a Serb.

And then Bosnia was at the very bottom of the Commission's list because of the lack of even a true majority consensus. The vote that was held after the EC asked the Bosnians to hold a plebiscite on independence was in some ways a farce because the Serbs boycotted and the and the Croats voted for it, but not because they genuinely supported a multi-ethnic country. They quickly went as far as the Serbs did, and created their own separate mini-state which flew the Croatian flag, and used Croatian currency. But tactically Tudjman knew that in order to get western support he had to appear to support a multi-ethnic Bosnia. So he told his people, you will vote for an independent Bosnia, and then afterwards we'll take care of you. It was kind of a farce, the plebiscite, and again that was at the root of many of the problems we're facing today.

I mentioned that Vance was arguing very strongly against recognition of Bosnia, and I think a number of the European countries had misgivings about it, but the debate did not focus on the issues that the commission raised. What the debate focused on was: how can we dissuade Serbs from in effect unilaterally seizing Bosnian territory. So the decision was based on the idea that the Serbs would be dissuaded because of fear of international reactions. So the act of recognition was really one of a series of disguised threats of force, or if you will, bluffs.

Q: *This sounds like a Washington type of...*

RACKMALES: No, I have to say that it was also the view that the embassy by and large was also putting forth. I was not there for all of that debate because I was on home leave for a key

segment of that. But my recollection is that we were, and Warren and most of the embassy staff, felt the way that I've just described, namely, that there would be more chance the Bosnian Serbs would refrain from violence if Bosnia were recognized.

Q: *I'm thinking really you might say the policy; working people, political section, maybe the economic section, the station chief; was there a division? How did you sense the embassy when these various elements came up?*

RACKMALES: We had a full range of policy differences. We had the people who wanted the United States to get involved with at least air power against the Serbs, not many proponents of sending U.S. troops, never have been as far as I could see. But we had people who wanted the Air Force to start bombing. But other Embassy officers were strongly opposed to any U.S. military involvement, thinking that all it would do would be to expand the fighting, cause more death and misery, and still not result in a viable multi-ethnic state. So, we had the full range. One of the achievements that I am particularly proud of is that despite all this, which would come out in our discussions in country team meetings, we continued to function as a team very effectively. We did not, I think, let our policy prejudices or preferences, however you want to characterize it, affect our reporting which I think was outstanding for objectivity, and Washington told us that we were far and away the most objective in reporting on the situation. I don't think anyone whether they belong in camp A, camp B, or somewhere in between, was particularly happy with the way U.S. positions were unfolding. What we were often doing was talking as if we were going to do something that would make camp A happy, and then in fact behaving as if we were really in camp B, so people were always off balance. I remember going back to Washington at a time early in the Clinton administration when the people in camp A, the proponents of bombing the Serbs now, were saying, now it's going to happen because of what Clinton said in the campaign. He's strongly committed to this. Some of the new administration's pronouncements about lift and strike tended to reinforce that. A message that they sent to Milosevic reinforcing one that Bush had sent that sounded very bellicose, almost like the kind of ultimatum you send when you're really about to take action. I remember when I went back to Washington in spring, 1993 and camp A was saying: they're going to be evacuating us, and we're really going to hit the Serbs. I was skeptical and as a result of my consultations in Washington it became clear to me that we were no closer to a decision of that kind than we had been in the final months of the Bush administration. So I came back and shared my impressions with my colleagues, and there were some very disappointed people on the staff and others who were relieved.

Let me just make one brief point about professionalism if I may because I think it's appropriate. I was one who was unhappy with the American Foreign Service Association. For a period of several months around the time of the resignations, George Kenney, Marshall Harris...

Q: *I agree with you on this. In the first place, Pope John Paul II made an announcement, and again being outside I shuddered when I heard this about supporting Croatia because if the Germans were particularly bad over Serbia, the Catholic church was almost as bad during World War II, the equivalent of pogroms, or whatever you want to call them against Serbs. How did that hit?*

RACKMALES: Well, I think you characterized it correctly. I think it was very short sighted to turn the crisis into implicitly a religious struggle in which you side with one of the parties who happens to share your religion. There were many contradictions and ironies. The Catholic bishop of Sarajevo was a proponent of ethnic cooperation in Bosnia and was working to promote reconciliation. Unfortunately, he was living under a severe death threat in Sarajevo and couldn't even leave his residence. Who do you think was threatening him? Nationalist Croats. Croats whose views were like those of the Archbishop of Mostar, whom I had called on at the time of the Bosnian elections. I never met a more nationalistic Croat than the Archbishop of Mostar. He bragged about the fact that 98% of his flock were members of Tudjman's party. He was a fire and brimstone nationalist.

Q: *When did Warren leave, and how did he leave?*

RACKMALES: He left in May of 1992. He left within a day or two of the European ambassadors. This was another example of the frequent breakdown in communication and coordination between the Europeans and ourselves. Neither the resident ambassadors of the European Community in Belgrade, nor the United States Government knew, although there had been vague rumors, that in fact at a meeting of European Community foreign ministers, the issue was being discussed of withdrawing EC ambassadors. So the first that anyone learned of this was when Genscher left the meeting which was still going on and announced to the world that the European community was withdrawing ambassadors from Belgrade. I heard that Jim Baker picked up the phone and gave Genscher hell for the lack of consultation. Maybe Genscher's defense was that the EC ambassadors had not been told either. Even though Baker was angry, he realized that there was no way that we could keep an ambassador there once the Europeans had withdrawn theirs.

Q: *What precipitated this?*

RACKMALES: The fighting in Bosnia had begun, and the situation was rapidly getting worse. There was no sign of any Serbian responsiveness to the concerns of the international community, and also of course at that point Serbia was not recognized. The Ambassadors were not accredited to any recognized entity. Primarily it was done as a sop to public opinion, which was outraged over the carnage that was occurring, and demanding some response.

Q: *How did you deal during this time as Charge, which is really a very long time, with the Serbian government?*

RACKMALES: From June to December, 1992 the person who headed the Serbian government, the prime minister, was a Serbian-American businessman, Milan Panic. Panic had been brought in by Milosevic. Despite that, he told Eagleburger that his plan was to get rid of Milosevic. In other words, he was going to turn Serbia around from an authoritarian communist state, to a western oriented democratic friend of the United States. I was quite skeptical about his chances of accomplishing anything. I was also very nervous about having a United States citizen as prime minister. I was worried about freedom of information, what could I say about him in cables that he and his lawyers could access, so I tended to report in a very back channel way at first. Later on I got some reassurances, and I put more into the front channel, although it was always with a

limited distribution. I did see Panic regularly. I don't think he ever had any chance, even if he had been politically more savvy than he was, of unseating Milosevic. Milosevic is an extremely astute operator. He would not make such a dumb mistake as to bring someone all the way from the United States who is going to threaten him in any way. It was naive of Panic to think it could be otherwise. Any small chance that he theoretically might have had were undercut by his complete ignorance of the Serbian scene. He didn't know the players or even speak the language very well. He relied on a few advisers, including a former FSO, Jack Scanlan. Jack had been ambassador before Warren, and was working for Panic in a dual capacity. One was a business capacity as Eastern European representative for Panic's chemical corporation. The other was as a foreign policy and political adviser. Unfortunately, even though Panic certainly needed advice, he didn't always listen but when he did the advice he got was not always sound. One of the worst mistakes he made was to try to cozy up to one or two of the senior military people who I guess he and Jack felt might help swing the Army around to his side. And it ended up in a humiliation for Panic because the primary person whom they were targeting was playing a double game. So when Panic, shortly before the Serbian elections in December, nominated his supposed buddy to be Minister of Defense, the guy responds by issuing a press release saying no self-respecting Serb would ever work for Panic. That shows what a mismatch the Milosevic-Panic contest was.

Despite Panic's poor prospects we closely followed the Serbian elections, because if there was any chance of bringing in a more western oriented Serbian government, we couldn't ignore that possibility. And at the same time at that point UNHCR was operating in Bosnia out of Belgrade. The CSCE had monitors set up. We were involved in extremely intense multilateral contacts with UN agencies, with the CSCE, with our European colleagues trying to deal with the humanitarian crises. It was around the turn of the year, or early the following year, when we started getting the U.S. relief flights dropping supplies in eastern Bosnia.

Coming back to our role in Bosnia vis-a-vis Zagreb's, more and more as we went into 1993 organizations like UNPF, which had been headquartered in Belgrade moved their headquarters...

Q: *This is United Nations Protection Force.*

RACKMALES: It was headquartered in Belgrade during the period I would say roughly from June-July '92 until sometime in the early spring of '93. I spent a lot of time with the UNPF commander and his chief civilian deputy who were excellent sources. Most of the organizations that were actually in Bosnia, since we didn't have any official Americans except for a few communicators with UNPF units there, we were relying on UNPF, UNHCR, for reporting on Bosnia and we did a lot of that. Gradually, some of these shifted their operations up to Zagreb, so that put more of a burden on Zagreb. So basically there was an overlapping of responsibility until we actually set up the embassy there. Then I heard, this was after I'd left, but I heard that there were still some conflicts between Zagreb and the embassy in Sarajevo as to who was going to do what.

Q: *One of the things that precipitated resignations and tremendous emotion in the United States and all of western Europe were atrocities. Being in an area where the government with which you were working is involved, at least was seen to be involved in really horrible atrocities against others. How did you deal with this in these reports?*

RACKMALES: By trying to report as fully as we could, as accurately as we could, as credibly as we could, not taking every initial account of an atrocity at face value. There is a long tradition in that part of the world to use claims of massive abuses, atrocities, etc. as a political weapon. It's a difficult subject to discuss calmly and objectively because by its very nature an atrocity seems to call for strong emotional response. That came up with regard to the first of the mortars that fell in the Sarajevo market in '93. In the western media, of course, there was no initial doubt expressed that this was a Serbian atrocity. When the Serbs denied that it was their shell and accused the Bosnian government of shelling their own people, I would say that 99% in the west said this is absolutely outrageous and ridiculous. Here are these poor victims and now you're accusing them of murdering their own people. On the other hand, the UN personnel in Sarajevo who investigated the incident were highly suspicious of the Bosnian government, as David Binder pointed out in an excellent Foreign Policy magazine article, using the cynical (but not always wrong) Italian yardstick of "who benefits from this action." The results are straightforward. The Serbian side doesn't benefit, they get bombed and the international community comes down on them, while the Bosnian government gets more support, including military support. What worries me the most is that these atrocities, whoever is causing them, tend to drive policy. For example, the Bosnian government called for Holbrooke not to come to Sarajevo, to stop the peace process, because of an atrocity. That is comparable to Israelis and the Palestinians not talking to each other because of bus bombings, which are also atrocities. Often atrocities are carried out in order to disrupt peace process. Both the media and the administration would often apply a double standard perhaps because there were many more Serb atrocities which came earlier in the Bosnian conflict. Our Embassy for example, strongly complained following a Washington Post front page story reporting that Croat forces had come in and massacred several hundred Muslims in a town in central Bosnia. In contrast to the usual reaction to reported Serb misdeeds, the Department spokesman failed to condemn the action.

JAMES K. BISHOP, JR.
Assistant Secretary for Human Rights, State Department
Washington, DC (1991-1993)

Ambassador James K. Bishop, Jr. was born in New York in 1938. He received his bachelor's degree from Holy Cross College in 1960. His career has included positions in Auckland, Beirut, Yaoundé, and ambassadorships to Nigeria, Liberia, and Somalia. Ambassador Bishop was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in November 1995.

Q: Did you have any feeling, I mean was there a difference between the Baker regime and the Christopher regime regarding human rights reports, did you find?

BISHOP: I wasn't there through enough of the Christopher regime. See the human rights reports are drafted between September and January, and I was out of there by July or September. There were other human rights issues during that period, and frankly Christopher was a disappointment. We lost an enormous amount of credibility when he went out to China and told

the Chinese that if they didn't clean up their act that it would have a major impact on bilateral relations. Then the White House pulled the rug out from under him, and we went ahead and supported renewal of favored nation treatment for the Chinese despite a human rights record which hadn't improved at all over the previous year when the Democrats, many Democrats, were calling on the Bush administration to cancel most favored nation treatment.

In Bosnia he equivocated and equivocated in the face of a human rights record of abuse that became the worst in Europe since the demise of Adolf Hitler and even claimed there was an equilibrium of evil amongst the parties. It was clear to anyone who looked at the evidence that the Serbs were behaving in a fashion much more atrocious than that of the Muslims, and substantially more atrocious than the Croats. I sent him a memo at one point saying this, and somebody leaked it to the "New York Times" a month later, and it wound up on the front page of the “New York Times” to his distress. So, it was a disappointment.

There were some satisfactions. We did shift position on some international human rights issues, came to favor the creation of a High Commissioner for Human Rights in the UN system, which had been urged earlier but the Republicans had been opposed to. In the event the guy appointed as a result of UN bureaucratics has proven to be a grave disappointment to the human rights community, but the position is there and hopefully one day will be exercised by someone who will be fierce in the use of the mandate.

We did move towards ratification of some human rights treaties which had been gathering dust for many years, although in fairness to the Bush administration, they moved one of these through, and had its mandate been renewed were prepared to move some others through. We positioned ourselves fairly well for the second world conference on human rights which took place in Vienna in June of 1993, didn't repeat the debacle of the world conference on the environment where the US government wound up being at odds not only with its own NGO community, but with virtually the rest of the world. We took a more mainstream position than the Congress and made some modest advances in international respect for human rights.

ROBERT M. BEECROFT
U.S. Mission to NATO
Brussels, Belgium (1991-1993)

While Mr. Beecroft served as Political Officer at a number of posts in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, his primary focus was on Political/Military Affairs, both in Washington and abroad. Later in his career he served as Special Envoy to the Bosnia Federation and subsequently as Ambassador to the Office of Security & Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) operating in Bosnia & Herzegovina. A native of New Jersey, Mr. Beecroft served in the US Army and studied at the University of Pennsylvania and the Sorbonne in Paris before joining the Foreign Service in 1967. Mr. Beecroft was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

Q: ’94, by the time you left, how were things playing out in Bosnia?

BEECROFT: Oh, they were awful. It was a subject of great shame and embarrassment that here was NATO, contributing a pittance -- headquarters and logistical support -- to a UN mission whose rules of engagement were quite robust enough, had they had chosen to use them, but because of political guidance from the UN. in New York they wouldn't use them. You had the worst of all worlds. The fiction of a benign environment. In Bosnia two million out of four million people either made refugees or killed. Milošević basically having his way. Tudjman having his way too, fighting a shadow war in Eastern Slovenia while dividing up Bosnia, or trying to. It was shameful.

Q: This must again, was in the professional ranks, speaking not only to the military, but the Foreign Service and all, a deep and almost abiding contempt for the UN as an instrument.

BEECROFT: Yes. I think Bosnia the process, which has gone on ever since, of defining the limits of the UN, first by admitting that there were limits. You see, there was a widespread belief in the early '90s that war-fighting as such was over. History was over, the Warsaw Pact was dead, its former members clamoring to get into the Partnership for Peace. There wouldn't be any more wars, so what was the mission of, or need for, military forces? But the militaries are organizations made up of human beings, and they preferred looking for a new role to presiding over their own demise. The new role that everybody jumped at was peace operations, which in turn produced a lot of theology. There were peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacemaking, and you had people trying to define each of these in different ways. Peacekeeping meant deploying forces in a conflict-free environment, which you wanted to maintain. Peacemaking meant a Chapter 7 operation, in which the forces would act aggressively and robustly as required. And peace enforcement meant moving in after the shooting had stopped and keeping things quiet.

What began to put some reality back into this? Well, Somalia for one thing. That was in 1993. The spectacle of U.S. Marines landing on a beach outside of Mogadishu in the glare of CNN spotlights -- you can imagine the comments of the military professionals in Brussels: "What is this, showbiz? It's a good thing there were no bullets flying." Well, not that long afterwards, we had Blackhawk Down. Without anyone understanding how or why, the mission morphed from peacekeeping to peacemaking. The term "mission creep" entered the lexicon.

Q: And to feed people. I mean there was a huge tragedy going on, the ability to deliver food.

BEECROFT: Yes, no food, no water. Eventually you had these professional soldiers, many of whom were American, who didn't really know what their mission was. There's a lot of quoting of Clausewitz around the National War College. One of his aphorisms that I like the most says "No one starts a war--or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so--without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it." Put another way, you have to know what kind of war you're fighting, and what you want to get out of it. And we didn't know. We went into Somalia without defining the mission, both political and military and that was an important lesson learned when we went into Bosnia a couple of years later.

Q: But we hadn't gone into Bosnia when you were there?

BEECROFT: No.

Q: I mean were people in the backroom drawing up plans and looking at logistics and things like that?

BEECROFT: I think there were probably more people doing that in the Pentagon than in Brussels, but there must have been people at SHAPE as well, which is not in Brussels and where the French don't play.

Q: You mentioned the French weren't in SHAPE because these were the actual military forces.

BEECROFT: Right. They do have a military liaison mission, but they don't play actively.

Q: I would think that there would be a certain amount of pressure from NATO to SHAPE in getting things done if you can just to keep the bloody French from screwing things up.

BEECROFT: Here's another good example. There was a big debate in '93 and '94 when it became clear that the Yugoslavia crisis was not going to go away anytime soon. The U.S., with British support and some sympathy from some of the continental allies, began urging NATO to start doing contingency planning -- a key phrase -- for eventual operations into the Balkans. The French objected. They said no, this is not the role of NATO or SHAPE. Of course it was precisely the role of SHAPE to do contingency planning for the Balkans. Then I don't remember who it was, it might have been Reggie Bartholomew, somebody said, well, if contingency planning is off the table, is there any problem if NATO does some contingency thinking? And the French rep replied No problem, it it's limited to thinking and not planning. You could see the looks around the room. What's the difference between contingency thinking and contingency planning? What it revealed to me was how carefully the French had mapped and schemed and thought this all out beforehand. They didn't object to our having some clear ideas in case the military had to go in, but they didn't want to formalize the process to an extent where it could supplant what the UN was doing or give NATO too much immediate credibility. Contingency thinking is deniable -- you're just thinking about it. And if you're writing it down, don't tell me about it.

Q: Yes.

BEECROFT: That's what was agreed. Contingency thinking was okay. Contingency planning was not.

Q: What about Srebrenica? Had that happened?

BEECROFT: No. Srebrenica happened in the summer of 1995.

Q: By the time you left there in '94, when did you leave in '94?

BEECROFT: The summer of '94.

Q: What did you think was going to happen? I mean let's look at the big picture. You had the partnership for peace, you had the French burr under the saddle and you had the Balkans falling apart. What did you think was going to come out of that?

BEECROFT: I think most of us were of the belief that it was not a question of whether, but of when NATO would use real force in Bosnia, and that's why the contingency thinking was so important. It meant that when NATO did finally respond in the summer of '95, the plans were there.

Q: Was there a feeling while you were still there the military saying, you know, a whiff of grapeshot is going to put these Serbs or the Bosnian Serbs, it's not going to take a hell of a lot.

BEECROFT: I think people at that point weren't sure. My conviction has always been that if NATO had reacted quickly in 1991, at the very beginning, when the shells first began falling on Dubrovnik, the Serbs would have backed off. The Serbs had massed artillery on this mountain looking down on Dubrovnik, a world heritage site, one of the most beautiful cities in the world. If NATO had simply dispatched one or two Italian gunboats and taken out that artillery, it would have been over, but by '94 the Serbs had the momentum and no one was pushing back. I don't think anyone was too sure that a whiff of grapeshot would do it. The circumstances, the military circumstances had changed by the summer of '95 so that people were more ready to believe that the Serbs were vulnerable than they seemed in '94.

Q: This was after the collapse of the.

BEECROFT: It was after Operation Storm.

Q: This was where the Croatians took the.

BEECROFT: That's it.

Q: What was the name of the area?

BEECROFT: Krajina..

Q: Krajina, yes.

BEECROFT: The Croatian army pushed the Serbs out of Krajina in 1995, Operation Storm. Then they moved into Bosnia and Herzegovina, combined forces with the Bosniaks, the Muslims, and moved on Banja Luka, the de facto capital of the Republika Srpska. Actually the RS government was in Pale, outside Sarajevo, but Banja Luka was the key Serb-controlled city. Both Washington and Brussels were concerned that if the Croats took Banja Luka, if there was a total Bosnian Serb defeat, the consequences could be really serious. The Serbian army would intervene, the war would get worse, and there would be a new and even bloodier phase.

GEORGE KENNEY
Yugoslavia Desk, Bureau for European Affairs
Washington, DC (1992)

George Kenney received a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Chicago. Mr. Kenney's government service began with the State Department's Bureau for Economic Affairs. In 1991, he joined the Foreign Service. In addition to serving in Marseille, Mr. Kenney has also held positions in Kinshasa and Washington, DC. This interview was conducted by Michael Springmann on September 10, 1993.

Q: *So you became the assistant country desk officer? When in your view did American policy toward Bosnia begin to fall apart?*

KENNEY: I guess I was called deputy officer-in-charge. I think we failed to develop a policy toward the Balkans from the start of the crisis. If you go back to '90 or '91, it was fairly obvious that Milosevic intended to destroy the Yugoslav federal system in order to create a greater Serbia. But the world was sort of tired, after going through the Gulf War. The bureaucracy in State did not want to encourage the dissolution of any Communist or ex-Communist country, partly in fear that that might encourage the Soviet Union to fall apart. At a higher level, to the extent that either Bush or Baker focused on the area, the intelligence was that Yugoslavia would fall apart fairly violently. So they thought that, if the U.S. committed itself to do something about that potential breakup, we might become involved in a war and might have to commit forces--a risk they didn't want to run. So they supported a "hands-off" policy, whatever else we might say.

We sent a lot of signals to the Serbs that we would not really get involved. We might act as neutral mediators, but that didn't bother Milosevic and the Serbs at all. Because there wasn't any high level interest in looking at the crisis, we never really defined the problem very well. By the time the conflict began to get out of hand, Eagleburger and Baker were saying that it was a civil war or an ethnic conflict. They were trying to rationalize the U.S. not getting involved. It seems to me that the right way of looking at this is to understand that Milosevic was able to take over a crumbling Communist system, substitute his own political machinery and start to manipulate people, particularly through the mass media--the electronic media. Most people in Serbia are illiterate; probably less than five percent have a college education. They depend on radio and TV. There were a couple of independent radio and TV stations in Belgrade, but for the most part the Serbian masses depended on state-controlled media. From 1986 through 1991, Milosevic was telling people that they had a lot of grievances that needed to be redressed. If they weren't persuaded by what they heard on TV, Milosevic was also getting control of the police, the secret police and the army, as well as key unions and jobs. So people couldn't very easily resist all this. To make it even easier, the Croatian government, under Tudjman, was moving in a somewhat similar direction, although not as malevolently. Tudjman was kind of threatening the Serbs in Croatia. The Croats violated Serbian human and civil rights and, in some cases, killed people and, in some cases, stole property and put people in jail. The Serbs in Croatia had cause for alarm.

In any case, the Serbs started the conflict. No one in the outside world wanted to become involved. We went from bad to worse. By the time I arrived on the desk in February 1992, I immediately noticed that the CIA was predicting that Bosnia was very likely to blow up. As I considered the intelligence reports and analysis and talked to people to learn as much as I could, it seemed to me that the CIA estimate was probably correct. So I recommended that at a minimum, the State Department develop a contingency plan for dealing with the breakup of Bosnia, so that, if it started to happen, we would not be caught unprepared. No one really wanted to listen to that kind of recommendation. We were so caught up in rationalizing non-involvement and in reliance on mechanisms, such as the CSCE or the EC to produce some sort of settlement that we didn't want to contemplate how much worse the war could get.

Q: *If the desk was urging some action, who was resisting? The Assistant Secretary? The Deputy Secretary? The Secretary?*

KENNEY: There are two levels to this. In early January, Eagleburger returned to the Department from a White House meeting to tell senior officers--I wasn't there, but I was briefed--that, whatever we do, we could not get substantively involved in the Yugoslav crisis. We could proceed with as many diplomatic meetings as we wanted, but we could not commit the U.S. to do anything. We were permitted to talk to the EC and the Europeans, but that was the limit. Eagleburger was very consistent in that. He absolutely did not want us to get close to some kind of substantive involvement. The bureaucracy took those marching orders very seriously. Senior officers tried to avoid absolutely anything that might bring us closer to involvement. We could not talk about genocide or atrocities because that might arouse public opinion and force the administration to do something. We could not talk about starvation in Sarajevo for the same reasons.

Months before we started an airlift to Sarajevo, I had suggested that we do so because I knew that starvation there would start in the foreseeable future. The argument against that was that we might find ourselves in another Vietnam, and we couldn't risk that. When reports of atrocities and concentration camps began to leak out, I suggested that we should investigate by sending survey teams out to get the facts. We could have debriefed refugees. We could have built up a data base for possible later prosecution of the perpetrators. We didn't want to do that either. We have avoided dealing with the problem in every way; we did not want to take any risk of arousing public opinion. There was great concern that we might be forced to change the policy.

I think that, at the top level, there was a clear desire not to do anything. The bureaucracy, at the senior levels, picked that up and tried to enforce that policy. The bureaucracy at the mid-level really resisted. I knew virtually nothing about the Balkans before I started to work on these issues. I soon learned from my colleagues - in INR, in the Bureau, in the field, in CIA - what was going on in Bosnia. I was a blank slate, but it became obvious to me very quickly from what I heard from all sources that our policy was not working. That view was a majority view, by far, among the working-level experts. So there was a disconnect between the working level, who could see what we were doing was a terrible mistake, and the senior level, who thought they had some better political sense. Interestingly enough, later on, by July and August, as we entered the Presidential campaign, Bush and Baker seemed to become interested in testing the waters a little more. Baker, on a couple of occasions during appearances before Congress made strong

statements to the effect that we would do whatever it would take to deliver humanitarian aid. I remember that I tried to tape those words so that they could be used for press guidance. But the Office Director insisted that we would have "to walk back" from those statements. After the Secretary made some statements, the principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for EUR called in the NATO Ambassadors to brief them on what the Secretary had said because they were all very interested. The briefing in fact provided no indication that we had changed our policy, even a little. I think that the senior bureaucrats failed to realize that at the senior political level there may have been disagreement or confusion about what our policy should be. So the senior bureaucrats stuck to their original marching orders which, as I said before, were essentially "do nothing" and say as little as possible. We still see that today. We are trying to get a U.N. war crimes tribunal prosecutor. The British absolutely do not want to have a prosecutor who will bring indictments because they think, correctly, that such indictments would upset the peace process. Others, like myself, believe that indictments would be a good thing to punish the perpetrators some day or at least to hold potential retribution over some people's heads. The U.S. is caving in to the British; we are not willing to challenge them in the Security Council. So we are not really pushing for the selection of a strong prosecutor, but are looking only at compromise candidates who are certainly not going to seek indictments. It is a farce almost to a point where someone should nominate Kurt Waldheim for the job.

Q: *Was that disconnect between the mid-level staff and the senior leadership a function of age or outlook or career concerns?*

KENNEY: I wouldn't say that age was a factor because there were a couple of senior officers who were very much opposed to our policy, or lack of policy, who continued to work surreptitiously against it. It was an extraordinary situation. Normally the "leaks" in the State Department come from the Seventh Floor's political appointees. Now you find people at the Office Director's level throughout the Department, who have knowledge of what is going on, who are talking relatively openly to the press. It is quite remarkable. People, who I would never dream would talk to a reporter, are now willing to take calls from them or talk to them face-to-face. People who oppose the Administration cover a broad range of ages.

There may be a division between people in the 20-40 age group and those in the 50-60 group, but the division is sharper between rank levels--the mid-level vs. the senior level, i.e., the Assistant Secretary, the Under Secretary, the Deputy Secretary. When I was in the Department, our Bosnian policy was made by a very small number of people: Eagleburger, Kantor (Under Secretary for Political Affairs) periodically, Tom Niles, Assistant Secretary for European Affairs--an old Yugoslav hand--, his principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ralph Johnson, our Office Director, Mike Habib. Those five guys were making the policy. They didn't listen to the desk officer, they didn't listen to INR, they didn't really listen to CIA. The "do nothing" policy was approved by the top level of the Administration.

Q: *What was the position of our missions in the country? Did they just toe the line?*

KENNEY: The Embassy in Belgrade was entirely too cozy with the Serbian government. Ambassador Warren Zimmermann talked to Milosevic and believed he could deal with him. It wasn't until he was recalled in July, 1992 that Zimmermann had a change of heart and began to

doubt that Milosevic could be dealt with and that perhaps force might be necessary. He would send cables which said that, on the one hand, Milosevic was a bastard and vicious, but, on the other, he is sort of reasonable and that there were ways to talk to him. After the Ambassador's recall, we left a Charge in Belgrade who conducted "business as usual," when we should not have done so. There is an irony right now because, although we have an Embassy in Belgrade, we do not recognize the present Serbian regime and do not conduct diplomatic relations with it. We do not recognize the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We maintain that Yugoslavia is dissolved; we recognize three of its former republics, but the "Federal republic" exists in a gray area. Why do we have an Embassy then? The Department wants to maintain an Embassy to have a listening post and an observer in Belgrade and a facility which permits some communication to the Serbian leadership. We have exchanged diplomatic notes to provide mutual protection for the diplomats, but if we are going to be serious about punishing Serbia, we should start by taking some action, such as closing our Embassy. If we ever do undertake any military operations, we should close the Embassy to prevent our staff from becoming hostage. It seems to me, as long as we have an Embassy in Belgrade, the Serbs must know that a lot of our threats of military action are hollow.

The Embassy was divided roughly the same way the Department was. The top level, more or less, was sympathetic with our policy. The working level, with whom I would talk daily, thought that our policy was completely screwed up. They were looking for ways to change it. I used to have long conversations every morning with the political section staff. We would explicitly condemn our latest policy pronouncement or action. The Department's Yugoslav desk and the Embassy's Political Section were very much of the same mind. We conversed on an open telephone line, and didn't really care whether the Serbs overheard us. I would talk to my contacts in the Political Section who would give me the latest update on the situation in Belgrade. They reflected, at least in the "spin" they put on the events, the concerns that we shared. The broader "think-pieces," usually written by the ambassador or the DCM, would be much more in tune with hopes of the senior officials in the Department and would emphasize the "talk to the Serbs" attitude.

At several points, our Office was trying to cut some of the other Department off from the communications from Belgrade. The Office Director and the DCM from July through August wanted to characterize the Bosnian war as the U.N. was doing. Rather than reporting a variety of differing interpretations of events on the ground, the Office and the embassy increased their communications through the Official-Informal channel which is not circulated in the Department. Only one copy of these messages were made for filing purposes. Finally, the Office of the EUR Assistant Secretary decided to crack down on this process. It dictated that all cable exchanges with the Embassy should be in regular channels. So the Office and the Embassy began to use the classified FAX channel to agree on a particular line to be taken; after reaching such agreement, the message would be turned into an official cable. It was something!

There is one story that sums up the experience. In early July, we were having a flap about concentration camps. One reporter had just written a book "Witness to Genocide" that included a lot of material on concentration camps. He had been very brave. He had traveled through Bosnia visiting a lot of these camps. I had heard about some of his stories because he had told the Consul General in Zagreb that he was working on this book, and wanted the C.G.'s views and

insights. The C.G. sent in a reporting cable, warning us that these stories and more would be made public soon. I thought that was an important break because I knew that once these stories of atrocities hit the press, we would be forced to respond. But I couldn't get anyone above me to focus on the issue. The problem was ignored until the stories broke. Then the Department reacted by saying it knew nothing of these matters. It would not acknowledge that there was a problem. The situation became very confused. At one point, the Department's spokesman Boucher had to admit that we knew about the concentration camps, then he retracted that admission. A day later, Tom Niles was testifying in Congress. Congressman Tom Lantos from California asked him what he knew about the camps. Niles had received two bits of advice on how to respond to that question: a) "stonewall"--i.e., deny any knowledge (this advice was given by the Office Director) and b) admit that we had a terrible problem and were trying to find out as much as we could on an urgent basis (my advice). Niles "stonewalled." He was really dressed down by the Committee. When he came back from the Hill, the Department went through another two days of crisis. Finally, Eagleburger issued a formal statement which said that we didn't have much information, but were trying to collect as much as we could, as quickly as we could. In the midst of all of this, I had to compile a short narrative for the President's evening reading book, which includes 10-15 different items. This report is intended to supplement the President's daily intelligence briefing. My paragraph was about concentration camps. I said that we knew that Serbs ran some camps; that we knew that the Serbs were responsible for most of the abuses, but, at the same time, I said that the Croats and the Muslims also ran camps, although the abuses in these facilities were not as serious. I gave some rough estimates of the number of camps. By the time I had finished circulating the draft for clearance, Eagleburger's office changed it to read that all factions ran camps and that all factions perpetrated abuses. I thought that it was just too much for a factual statement to be censored so that the President would not learn the truth. The bureaucracy had taken its original instructions and had taken them to extremes. We were, in fact, saying that, since our policy was not to do anything, the President should not be roused by fact; he might take some action. The Department would do what it was supposed to by keeping the U.S. out of this.

Q: *There was obviously a strong disagreement between those who felt that the Bosnian conflict was hundreds of years old and those who thought that, as it was primarily a Serb aggression, it was a new phenomenon.*

KENNEY: Right. The experience taught me that individuals really matter. Milosevic really mattered; he made all the difference in the world. If Milosevic hadn't lived, the Serbs would not have created him. Milosevic himself, if he had a different personality, could have turned Yugoslavia in an entirely different direction. He could have used his great bureaucratic power to bring Yugoslavia into Europe, to increase economic prosperity. But he is really a diabolical man. Hitler was like that, also Stalin, Lenin. There are people, including evil ones, who can change history. Milosevic was one of them. Very early in his regime, we could have told him that we didn't back him trying to build a "Greater Serbia." We should have told him that we were prepared to apply economic sanctions or we were prepared to punish him in a variety of ways. We might even have threatened to arm his opponents. Milosevic didn't get firm hold of the Army until mid-1991, just before the start of the fighting. He has purged the military since that time on a number of occasions, including a recent major discharge of a number of generals. Soon he will have to get rid of some colonels. The Yugoslav Army was a large, professional organization--the fifth largest in Europe. A lot of its officers were American-trained. They were reluctant to fight

their own people. It was an unprofessional thing to do. It was difficult for Milosevic to get control of the military. He had to fool them, to a certain extent, about his objectives. Now he had built up a domestic police force in Serbia which is as strong, if not stronger, than the Army. There were a lot of ways we could have exercised leverage on him, but we didn't. By the time we got around to invoking sanctions in mid-92, it was too late.

Q: *Was there any real organized opposition in State?*

KENNEY: Not really. That is something I would do differently if I had to do it over again. After I left, individuals started to send "Dissent" memoranda. There were twelve who sent a letter to Christopher; there were another half dozen "Dissent" memoranda. Although it may not have had a huge impact, it was a way for individuals to go on record and to show that dissent existed in the ranks. In my work, I dealt every day with the press spokesperson for EUR who was married to the Executive Secretary of the Department. "Dissent" memoranda go to the Executive Secretary. The spokesperson was telling her husband what I thought of the policy; he thought that my message was getting through regardless whether I was putting it on paper or not. The only purpose of writing a "Dissent" memorandum would have been to leave a paper trail and, in retrospect, I think I should have done so. But I didn't have the experience to know that at the time. I also think I should have asked for meetings with some senior officials, such as Kantor. I would have told him that we were making some very dangerous mistakes and that our policies should be reconsidered. But I was too inexperienced to know to do that

MARSHALL FREEMAN HARRIS
CSCE Monitor
Macedonia (1992)

Political Officer-Bosnia Desk
Washington, DC (1993)

In addition to his service as Desk Officer for Romania, Marshall Freeman Harris served in London, Bulgaria, and at various other State Department posts. He was interviewed by Michael Springmann in August of 1993.

Q: *How long did you consider the question of resignation?*

HARRIS: My first real thought about it came in June, 1993. The situation in Bosnia was continuing to deteriorate. As an alternative to a stronger policy, we had decided to go along with the European countries and create "safe" areas in Bosnia. However, nothing was done to implement that policy either. The signatories of the "Joint Action Program" of May 22, were not putting any troops into the region. It was as if just another series of U.N. Security Council resolutions had been passed--pious words, but no action. We claimed that our policy toward Bosnia had to be multi-lateral--e.g. any action had to be taken in conjunction with our allies, but nothing was happening.

I reached a new low point on July 20 or 21 when Secretary Christopher had a news conference before his Tokyo trip. During the course of that interview, he claimed that we--the U.S.--were doing all we could consistent with our national interests. This was at a time when the situation in Sarajevo was worst than it had been at any time during the previous seventeen months of siege. People were on the brink of starvation; they had almost no water, electricity, natural gas or any other fuel--even wood--to cook with. I thought that if we couldn't respond to such an inhumane situation, if the Secretary of State of the United States was taking such a passive tack in the face of such a dire situation, then there would be very little that would prompt the policy makers to change course.

After that, when the Administration announced a slightly more vigorous policy by threatening to launch an air strike to lift the Sarajevo siege, I had a hard time becoming enthused; I could not convince myself that such strikes would actually ever be launched. I thought that even if raids were initiated, they would be of such a limited character that they could not address the core of the Bosnian problem which was rampant Serb aggression.

The last straw came at the end of July when I realized that the threatened air strikes had the intended purpose of putting pressure on the Bosnian government to accept a partition settlement in Geneva. We were in fact telling the Bosnians that we would be prepared to launch the strikes against Serb positions, but only to improve the humanitarian situation in Sarajevo and possible in some other locales. The strikes were not intended to roll back the Serb territorial gains. The Bosnian government was told that it should seize this opportunity to get the best deal it could in Geneva.

Q: *How openly was the Bosnian situation discussed in the Department? What was said for public consumption to the competing parties in Bosnia and what were the State officers saying? Was it ever made clear what was said for public consumption and what was the real policy?*

HARRIS: I don't think the distinction was ever made. I think that people at the policy making level didn't necessarily see any inconsistency or disconnect between what was happening "on the ground" in Bosnia and the policy they were espousing. They thought the policy of pressuring the Bosnians completely reasonable. We, at the working level, considered that policy simply awful in every sense of the word. We were certain that the suffering in Sarajevo and elsewhere in Bosnia would continue and that Serb aggression would be ratified. Even worst, we thought that some of the fundamental principles which had provided the underpinnings to our foreign policy since the end of World War II--e.g. the U.N. Charter, the sanctity of international borders, territorial integrity, the right of national self-defense--were being abandoned by the Clinton administration.

Q: *At what level was policy being made? The desk officer usually has great influence, but that doesn't seem to have been the case in this situation. Was it the Assistant Secretary or higher in the Department or at the White House?*

HARRIS: Policy is made in different ways depending on the situation. What ever policy decision on Bosnia had in common was that it was reactive. We didn't have a cogent policy; we didn't really have a world view. No one had apparently really sat down and considered what our

national interests were at stake in Bosnia, because if they had, I am certain they would have had to develop a different policy. Sometimes, policy initiatives came from the desk, but they were also reactive as in the case of Srebrenica when that city was surrounded in April by Serbs who kept tightening the noose around the city. I wrote an "options" paper in which I tried to lay out ever military and non-military measure that we could employ to ease the suffering of the Bosnians. Each option had a commentary on the pros and cons. I did the same thing when the Sarajevo situation deteriorated so badly, probably in early July.

At other times, the initiative came from the highest level as in the case of the joint action program announced on May 22. You will recall that we, Great Britain, Russia, France and Spain--which was at the time occupying the chairmanship of the U.S. Security Council--got together then and agreed on some points and a strategy which highlighted the "safe area" concept. That development was initiated by the European Foreign Ministers and by Secretary Christopher, with the possible participation of Tony Lake and the NSC staff and Steve Oxman, the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs.

Q: *When were you first assigned to the Bosnian desk?*

HARRIS: It was February, 1993. I was assigned as a political officer, although I belonged to the administrative "cone". My first assignment in the Foreign Service was London as consular officer and staff assistant to the administrative Minister-Counselor. Then I returned to Washington for Bulgarian language training and area studies, after which I went to Sofia as the General Services officer. Later I became a political officer there. At the end of 1990, I returned to the Department for a six months stint in the Operations Center. Then I worked in the Secretariat doing advance work for Secretary Baker for another six months. From the beginning of 1992 until August, 1992, I was a special assistant to Secretary Baker. After he resigned, I went to Macedonia for three or four months as a CSCE monitor as part of what was called the "spill over" mission which was established to try to prevent any spread of the Bosnian conflict into that part of the former Yugoslavia. Then it was back briefly to the Secretariat staff, where I was assigned to advance Secretary Christopher's trip to Damascus. After that brief chore, I was assigned to the Bosnian desk.

Q: *Tell us a little about coordination with Defense, CIA and other government agencies on implementation of U.S. policy.*

HARRIS: At higher levels, there was a lot of consultation and coordination. At my level and even at the office director level, I don't think there was a great deal of substantive cooperation. We had a daily teleconference of the office directors or deputy assistant secretaries in the various agencies--State, DOD, JCS, OSD and NSC. I think CIA was also included, although I can't be certain because I attended only one of these conferences. I gather that the agency representatives used these meetings to talk through policy issues or to exchange information about what was going on in Bosnia, but I don't think any significant decision were ever made in those meetings. It was more a matter of information exchange and discussion about what had been passed on to these officials from their bosses.

Q: *How effective were the people you were dealing with? Did they really know what was going on in Bosnia? Did they know the history of this centuries old conflict? Gary Sick, in his book on the Iranian revolution, says that people in Washington and in other capitals, didn't really understand the history of the entity they were dealing with.*

HARRIS: I think that was also true in the case of our Bosnian policy, but in an unusual manner. The policy makers tried to portray the conflict in Bosnia as just another event in a long history of ancient ethnic rivalries and hatreds. They saw it essentially as a civil war that had been going on for hundreds of years. They saw it as all being against all in Bosnia. That was their little foray into history; it was unfortunately inaccurate. Beyond that, the Bosnia policy makers in the Clinton administration have no background in the region or in the history of the region. In comparison, the Bush administration, which unfortunately reached the conclusion that we had no real interests in Bosnia and that therefore we should not become involved--a decision that was reached for very cynical domestic political reasons in an election year--the Secretary of State, who had been the Deputy Secretary, was Lawrence Eagleburger. He had served in Serbia and had spent a significant part of his career involved in or following closely the events in the Balkans. Under Eagleburger, you had Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Tom Niles who had also served in Serbia and in the Soviet Union and therefore knew the Balkans very well. The National Security Advisor was Brent Scowcroft who had also served in Belgrade as a Defense Attaché and who had also followed Balkans events closely.

In the Clinton administration, the Secretary of State spent four years as Deputy Secretary, which is usually not a policy making position or is out of the policy making loop. The rest of Christopher's career was devoted to the law and I doubt whether he ever became deeply involved in the Balkans. The Assistant Secretary for European Affairs is Steve Oxman who to my knowledge has not ever been in the region, much less having studied it. The list goes on and on. The special envoy to the peace negotiations in Geneva is Reginald Bartholomew who, while having the reputation for being an excellent diplomat and negotiator, was in the region only once, in April, 1993; he has no professional background in Eastern European affairs.

The professional Foreign Service officers, who are knowledgeable are advising the policy makers to a certain extent, but their views are largely ignored. No matter how open the doors of the political appointees are, the Foreign Service is not going to rush in every day with memoranda and policy papers saying that it disagrees with what the administration is doing. The career Service was largely in favor of a change of policy and was consistently pointing out the disadvantages of carrying on the course that the Clinton administration was taking. The Service's views were to no avail. The discussions were always very pleasant and polite and conducted through prescribed channels, but the comments of the career Service, I think, rolled off the backs of the policy makers.

Q: *INR gives weekly briefings to a variety of State officials, including Assistant Secretaries. Did they ignore the reports on Bosnia?*

HARRIS: I think so. I guess that the root problem really was that the Clinton administration viewed foreign policy in general as an extension or adjunct to its domestic policy. It did not treat foreign policy on its own merits. That was especially true in the case of Bosnia where the

overwhelming concern of the policy makers was whether that situation would take up all the headlines and the news and whether we would be embroiled or dragged into a conflict that we would prefer to stay out of. The concern, I think, was that our involvement might somehow jeopardize Hillary Clinton's health care package or the budget bill. That is no way to view foreign policy. Foreign policy is a subject matter that stands on its own feet. But this administration treats it as a secondary manner, which it is not. My comment goes beyond Bosnia, although that is at the moment the most important foreign policy issue facing the country.

Q: *How much Congressional interest was there? How was it manifested? Did you receive many calls from Congressional offices?*

HARRIS: I had a lot of calls from Congressional staffers and from Congressmen themselves, asking what was going on in Bosnia or asking for an explanation of our policy. Even now I think there is a core group of about 100 Representatives from both parties who would be willing to take Clinton on his policy. There are Republicans and Democrats prepared to support legislation which would expand our role in Bosnia. In the Senate, there are probably 25-30 Senators who would favor a more activist policy. That number may be growing. As our government is established by the Constitution, the Legislative Branch can't really take any initiative of foreign policy and that is what is missing. If Clinton were to exert some leadership on this issue, a majority in both Houses would support him.

Q: *Are these Congressmen who have special expertise in foreign affairs?*

HARRIS: I think the group represents a broad spectrum. But there was an absence of rigorous questioning of administration representatives by congressional committees. Since I have started working on the Hill, I have heard some criticism from Republican Congressmen and staffers. They feel that the Democratic-led committees were too reluctant to call State Department witnesses to discuss Bosnian policy. They feel that there was far too little of that.

Q: *How much media interest was there during the period you served on the desk? Obviously, there is considerable interest now that you have resigned and done so publicly. How was it earlier?*

HARRIS: There was a lot of media interest, but perhaps not quite enough. What Americans respond to is generally television pictures--blood in the streets. I don't think the networks, although showing those pictures, have not put them in their proper context. You see and hear the shells being fired, you hear the sniper fire, you see people scurrying for cover and then you see the dead and the wounded, but that is all you get. There is no explanation of what and why these events are taking place. There is no discussion that Sarajevo has been encircled for seventeen months, that people can not leave their areas, that they are terrorized every night with artillery and sniper fire. Had the networks told the full story, we would be arguing now not only what we should do for humanitarian reasons, but what we could do about the root causes of the conflict, which is Serbian aggression.

The other thing that had prevented a full discussion of the issues is that Secretary Christopher and the other Clinton administration policy makers would have you believe that what we see on

television is not what is actually happening. Sarajevo is under siege; there are other Muslim areas of Bosnia under siege, but the Secretary and other officials insist that we are witnessing just a civil war and that all three sides are attacking each other and that they would continue to do so regardless of any U.S. action because they have been doing it for hundreds of years. That rationale supports a no-action policy.

Q: *Would it be fair to say that the issue is not historic ethnic animosities in the Balkans, but essentially Serb aggression.*

HARRIS: It is as simple as that. The regime in power presently in Belgrade is driven by a twisted ideology that Serbs must live in Serbia and that Serbs can not live side by side with non-Serbs. That is what is driving the Bosnian conflict today. There are, of course, ancient rivalries and ancient ethnic differences among the three major groups, but they have lived relatively peacefully side-by-side for hundreds of years. The lie of the Milosevic ideology is exposed most easily by looking at the 25-30% of the Bosnian population which is of mixed ethnicity. What will happen to these people if the three Bosnian groups can live together? It is often the case that members of different ethnic groups have married. They have been reluctant to list themselves in census surveys or identify themselves in conversations as members of one ethnic group or another. They identify themselves as "Bosnians". Had we permitted the Bosnian state to come into being properly, primarily by allowing its army to operate with adequate weaponry, then there would have been a different dynamic and people would not have accepted so readily the view that varying ethnic groups could not get along together.

Q: *Beyond the Serbian problem, what other issues are there in Bosnia today?*

HARRIS: The war has torn everything asunder. The principal issue should have been "democratization". We have a vital interest in seeing that outcome for all the republics which came into being after the collapse of Yugoslavia. They need to become democracies quickly and start on the road to economic development. These are objectives that we are ignoring in Macedonia, for example. We should be moving full steam ahead there because by encouraging democracy and free markets, you discourage ethnic feuding and nationalism.

Q: *What kind of guidance did the office director for Bosnia provide you?*

HARRIS: We had two office directors, who approached the issue from two different perspectives. The first one, Michael Habib, was a non-interventionist--an absolute non-interventionist. At one point, he may have been virtually the only person on the Office of East European Affairs who was opposed to the U.S. intervening militarily in Bosnia. His relationship with the desk officer reflected that view. He was replaced by Terry Snell, who did believe that we had a responsibility of getting more involved in Bosnia. He was more responsive to the views of the people at the working level, who wanted the U.S. to do more.

Q: *What role did our Ambassador and the Embassy play?*

HARRIS: Not a great deal in terms of policy making. I didn't like a lot of the reporting that came out of Belgrade either from Ambassador Zimmermann or Charge Rackmales. I thought that they

began with the same assumptions that our Washington policy makers made; i.e., that this was a tripartite conflict and that the U.S. should not have ground troops in Bosnia. I also thought that the Embassy had the typical case of "clientitis," for which the Foreign Service is notorious. It thought that we could work with the Serb regime and that Milosevic and Karadzic, the Serb spokesman, could be talked to with beneficial outcomes possible in that manner. I would have preferred for the Embassy to take a more independent course, but that is the way embassies operate in general. Belgrade was no means an exception to the rule. My understanding was that virtually the entire political-economic section favored intervention, but was consistently over-ruled by the Embassy's leadership.

Q: *Before we end this interview, I would like to give you an opportunity to make any comments that might be helpful to future historians who might be interested in this period and the subject of Bosnia.*

HARRIS: I have no doubt that was is taking place in Bosnia is genocide. The Serb attempt to drive all Muslims out of Bosnia or exterminate them, if that were necessary and if the world were not watching, meets the definition of genocide in international law. Secretary Christopher has failed to discharge his official responsibilities properly. He carried them out only partially and without the necessary objectivity by refusing to determine that Serb activities in Serbian were genocide. Secondly, he refused to identify the root cause of the Bosnian war as naked Serb aggression, a nationalist-fascist regime in Belgrade. He has overlooked this fact because to recognize it publicly would have placed incredible pressure on the United States, as the world's leading power, to take action in Bosnia to prevent the genocide and the aggression. I believe that Christopher's failure in his respect are unconscionable and that was the principal reason why I left the Department.

The other reason is that this administration is abnegating the U.S. responsibilities accepted by this country under international treaties and in various international organizations since World War II. I refer especially to our obligations under the U.N. charter to prevent the destruction of a member state. The U.S., in fact, is encouraging the destruction of Bosnia by putting pressure on the legitimately elected government of Bosnia to accept its own dismemberment in violation of every U.N. Security Council resolution that has been passed on this subject. We have violated Security Council principles and the U.N. Charter. That too is unconscionable. History will be very unkind to this administration for abnegating these responsibilities and allowing the genocide in Bosnia to continue unfettered, although we had the means at our disposal to prevent it.

J. D. BINDENAGEL
Office Director, Central Europe, State Department
Washington, DC (1992-1994)

Ambassador J. D. Bindenagel was born and raised in Huron, South Dakota. He graduated from the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign in 1971 with a degree in political Science. After serving in the Army, Mr. Bindenagel joined the Foreign Service in 1975. During his career he has served in Bremen, Bonn, East

Berlin and many positions within the Department of State. He was interviewed on February 3, 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: We're talking about the Clinton Administration, '93.

BINDENAGEL: … and Secretary Warren Christopher's first speech in February was on the war in Bosnia. We needed to do something in Bosnia. The whole debate on Bosnia had swirled around about what the UN should do and NATO should do, what the U.S. should do, whether it should be considered an internal or international conflict. Bosnia dominated the early political discussion. At the same time, the German Defense Minister, Volker Rühe, gave a speech on March 26 in London, calling for NATO expansion for new countries, East-Central Europe. Bosnia and NATO expansion became mixed together, and I started to see in my own work that we were going to deal with them in the context of the Nazi past. We had a very interesting beginning of the Clinton Administration, from the Office of Central-European Affairs.

Part of the reason the Holocaust and NATO enlargement emerged from the Museum opening was derived from Elie Wiesel's speech at the Holocaust Memorial Museum, particularly since he was a survivor of the Nazi concentration. Wiesel spoke of the Holocaust and said there was another Holocaust beginning in Bosnia. He called on the U.S. and the heads of governments to act. He was telling the new President that he needed to do something. This event presaged my very interesting involvement in NATO enlargement.

Richard Holbrooke was named Ambassador to Germany in June, 1993 and he sought to define a whole set of new issues. He had issues for me to consider: What do we do with Bosnia, what do we do with NATO? What do we do with Central Europeans on our watch?

I had already called the Embassy in Bonn, to ask the political counselor, Don Bandler, about the Rühe speech to determine whether the Defense Minister's talk on NATO was German policy? Do they really want this expansion, and if they are launching this initiative, what are they going to do about it? The answer back was, "Oh, no, that was just a speech by the Minister." I said, "Well, ask the Chancellor's Office, ask the Foreign Office, ask the Defense Ministry." The answer comes back, "Just a speech." What do you mean, it's just a speech? What is he trying to do? Answers would come later. In June, Senator Lugar gave a speech on NATO enlargement. He, too, had questions about what should we do with the problem in Bosnia. Suddenly we had an unofficial speech of the Defense Minister of Germany and the another from the Republican Senate opposition party, a very senior foreign policy spokesman for the Republican party saying, "NATO enlargement." Meanwhile the fighting in Bosnia continued. We did not have the answer to the question about what to do in Bosnia. We had not defined a role for the U.S.

The Germans don't have an army that could be legitimately deployed in conflict outside Germany. That is, the Bundeswehr had never been used in a conflict. The German domestic political debate is deeply involved in a serious of questions on sending their ships or German Navy sailors to participate in sanctions against Serbia in the Adriatic. The debate is also legal and is expected to go to court as the issue develops. Another related issues was whether the FRG could send their crews on AWACS (Airborne Warning aircraft control ships) aircraft to fly over Hungary to monitor the NATO sanctions against Serbia? Hungary was particularly difficult

because it was a former communist country and member of the Warsaw Pact. The court did not decide early on the issue; the German Government decided the Luftwaffe could fly such missions, but the F.D.P. coalition member had brought suit in court against the decision. Of course, the Luftwaffe had not been deployed in a combat at time when their defense minister proposed NATO enlargement. These security issues in the post Cold War world was all very confusing and hard to deal with.

Diplomacy is a mixture of policy papers, briefing memos and speeches that lead to decisions. Steve Oxman, the new Clinton Administration Assistant Secretary for Europe gave a speech to the Atlantic Council in August 1993. As Assistant Secretary for European Bureau his speech would be an important step forward in our policy make. Working with Oxman's speech writer, we put in a few questions that Senator Lugar had posed earlier in an attempt to see if the Atlantic Council meeting, which included press, to see if the debate on NATO enlargement was ripe for discussion. We learned that the focus was still on Bosnia, not NATO enlargement. Steve Oxman then went to a North Atlantic Council (NAC) meeting in Brussels, to talk about what kind of U.S. participation should an IFOR, an international force under the UN, have.

Then the action on new security structures shifted in the next few months over to the Pentagon and Frank Wisner, who was Under Secretary of Defense. He was invited for a regular meeting with his counterpart, FRG Defense Ministry State Secretary Jorg Schonbohm. The meeting took place in the German Ministry's Berlin office in the Bendler Block, which had been the headquarters for the Wehrmacht and sight of retribution killings for the failed coup against Hitler in July 1944.

Wisner and Schonbohm met for their annual high-level group consultations and Ambassador Holbrooke went and I also attended. The meeting was also in preparation for the upcoming Travemunde Defense Ministers meeting. The topic was of course Bosnia and the military forces necessary to meet the challenge. The State Secretaries were looking for an initiative for the defense ministers and they came up with the idea of Partnership for Peacekeeping in Bosnia. The meeting was quite remarkable and lasted late into the night. I was the only State Department attendee as the military had its long nearly all-night discussions on Partnership for Peacekeeping initiative. In the meeting agenda for Travemunde with Defense Ministers loomed large. Consequently, the Defense Ministers announced their initiative for Partnership for Peacekeeping as a way to deal with the Southeast and Central Europeans, but not to let them into NATO. Defense was not ready to discuss NATO enlargement, and they thought that this initiative of "Partnership for Peacekeeping" would fix the problem, even as it became Partnership for Peace. Indeed the debate was deflected as questions about framework agreements and work-plans enveloped the players and moved the issues inside in the bureaucracy. The delay was not long, however, the NATO Summit which was slipped from December to January 1994, took up the issue, reaffirmed Article 10 of the Washington Treaty, and started the debate again that NATO certainly could have new members. NATO enlargement did not stop the bureaucracy. From January 1994 almost all my work on security issues was on Bosnia and Partnership for Peace designed to answer questions about engaging more countries in PfP, and about preventing NATO participation in UN mission. Let the IFOR do its job under the UN and keep NATO out of the process; that was the game plan.

And in terms of NATO, the debate from my vantagepoint was whether our job in Europe was finished and therefore perhaps we could go home. We asked whether we really even needed NATO? That was the debate. The sub-text was whether we could downsize dramatically our Forces in Europe. We had taken our Forces to the Gulf War and rather then bringing them back into Germany after the Gulf War, we re-deployed them to the U.S. The Pentagon set about reconfiguring the U.S. military presence in Europe and considered what force structure was necessary. They debated how to build two divisions, or two divisions (minus), and which bases were necessary and which could be closed. I became the U.S. Embassy negotiator on "residual value" of closed U.S. bases in Germany, a debate over money for military construction or for construction of a new U.S. Embassy in Berlin.

The whole concept of downsizing and eliminating our presence became also a political debate. In September of 1995 this process of U.S. abandonment of Europe was referred to in a speech at a symposium I attended at the Bundestag in the Wasserwerk. A French member of National Assembly spoke against relying on the U.S. by saying, "Look the Americans after the Gulf War re-deployed to the U.S., downsized their forces, they will continue to do that and they will leave Europe and go away." My Wasserwerk speech called for new defense industry partnerships as well as competitive projects to solidify our transatlantic cooperation. The tenor of the debate was the end of NATO and war in Europe for the Europeans to solve; that is, Bosnia was a European problem. Unfortunately the European made the problem worse, while we were downsizing and leaving. At the end of the bush Administration there was very little debate about NATO enlargement, because the issue was really about NATO's role and the continued presence of the Americans in Europe.

Q: I would think that the issue could be, particularly from the Department of State side, would be NATO made sense because it keeps all the military forces in the area under one tent, you know, we were there to keep France and Germany from going at each other again. And that in a way it doesn't look likely but it's still very much a possibility with a change in political leadership. So, it's a good idea to have it. From the Pentagon side, I would think it's something for you military forces to do, it gives employment to your troops. Congress would look the other way and the NSC would be trying to balance it up. Could you talk about this particular '92-94 period?

BINDENAGEL: In the early part of that debate indeed the question for the military was whether returning forces t the U.S. would mean demobilization. In fact, U.S. Forces were being downsized radically and DoD had to decide to keep their forces in the U.S. or in Europe. As DoD downsized in the US, the political pressure in Congress to downsize in Europe instead of the U.S. was much stronger. From where I was sitting the pressure was to maintain some semblance of NATO commitment, but to build the force structure to maintain it at home as well as to keep a minimal structure in NATO. There was also debate in the White House and in the State Department about the Franco-German relationship. We perhaps were convinced by the post war and Cold War experience that the Germans and the French had cooperated for this long period and that it wasn't necessary for us to play a mediator role in Europe any longer. If we didn't need to be there to keep to keep these formerly warring parties apart, they could build their own force structure to deal with the military problem in Bosnia. At the beginning of the process we were encouraged the Europeans to deal with this European problem. However, by the time of Chancellor Kohl's first visit to the new Administration in March 1993, the issue had changed

significantly because Europeans were not able to deal with Bosnia. They were unable to bring themselves together; they were unable to bring military force to bear on the problem. Frederick the Great's comment was very applicable. He said, "Diplomacy without weapons is like an orchestra without instruments." The Europeans were playing at diplomacy, but they didn't have any instruments. They couldn't solve the Bosnia problem without us.

At the beginning of the Clinton's Administration, very early part, Christopher's very first speech was on Bosnia, and how we deal with Bosnia. Then Volker Ruhe gave this March speech on NATO expansion, trying to draw the U.S. into using U.S. military force to help NATO deal with Bosnia. That was the beginning of the debate and preparation for Chancellor Kohl's meeting with President Clinton for the first time in March of 1993. The discussion inside the NSC and the State Department was not about NATO enlargement, it was about Bosnia and how do we bring military forces into Bosnia. The debate ran along the lines of: the only forces we had were NATO forces; did we want to use them? No, we didn't. In the end, we decided on a UN mandate and preferred to have the United Nations be the multilateral forum. The UN could bring in not NATO, because NATO had opposing forces in the former Warsaw Pact; deploying NATO troops to former Warsaw Pact countries was not conceivable. But those former Warsaw Pact countries were the very countries that were affected. They couldn't be brought into NATO we thought, and consequently a UN mandate seemed to be a more reasonable approach to deal with the Bosnia problem. As we then moved through the beginning of that period of March to May, June of '93, there was a debate among ourselves, "what did the Germans mean when they talked about NATO expansion? What did Volker Ruhe, the Defense Minister mean? Why did he do this? What was his purpose?" The Germans refused to pronounce themselves openly on what the policy was, in part because they had never used their military since the Wehrmacht in the Second World War. They were very tentative and didn't want to unleash an argument among the Europeans that would bring them back into conflict.

Q: From your point of view were they saying "it served its purpose and it serves its purpose well," or were they saying "and it's sort of outrun its time and let's think about it." Was it implied that they were thinking about letting it run its course and eventually move out of NATO you think?

BINDENAGEL: No. Congressional support for NATO was strong, but the circumstances for NATO action had changed. The opponents argued that to change it, was to destroy it and argued for NATO as it was. It was a very reasonable, defensive position when NATO seemed to be under attack for political reasons. In my own view, the problem was that in 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down and we celebrated with great euphoria the end of the Cold War, we also stopped thinking about what life without divided Germany and Europe meant for our policy. We were stuck, but history went on. New conflicts arose, new or old conflicts came back to us, as in the Balkans, the Romanian/Hungarian problems over ethnic conflicts, borders with Poland and Germany, the question of Kaliningrad (Konigsberg) being a part of the Russian Federation. Most such changes, as in the borders, normally led to war in Europe. The peaceful end to the Cold War and its affects on alliances were not factored into our thinking in any strategic way in the early days of 1993.

The thinking evolved throughout the summer of 1993 as the debate moved to the U.S. policy

circles, especially about the implications of sending forces to help deal with the Bosnian war. In August of 1993, Steve Oxman, the Assistant Secretary of the European Affairs at the State Department gave a speech at the Atlantic Council. His speechwriter assistant, Bob Litt, and I talked about the Lugar speech and we talked about putting the questions that Lugar and Volker Ruhe had raised into his speech in an academic setting to discuss this issue. That was done, but immediately thereafter attention turned to a NAC meeting, North Atlantic Council, in Brussels where we were negotiating what we would contribute and what we would not contribute in terms of Bosnia. And that was the debate that was happening in the State Department, in the Pentagon and in the NSC over questions such as why and where do we send forces and who should command these forces? It was clear that DOD did not want U.S. Forces commanded by the UN; they should be commanded by the U.S. We also discussed how a multilateral and multinational force could be commanded by NATO. That was the discussion and we tried very hard, and ended up with IFOR, UN forces, without American combat troops.

Q: Did you have the feeling that, I mean the Clinton administration came in with the phrase "Domestic economy is the most important thing" and President Clinton had not had any real foreign affairs experience. You did not have a Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, who had a world outlook. I mean it was basically, maybe I'm not being fair, but seemed to me, a man who was sort of the house lawyer for international affairs. He would deal with the problems, whatever the problems were on hand, he would deal with the, but he wasn't looking for anything. Did you have the feeling that you didn't have an administration that was willing to focus on this at the beginning?

BINDENAGEL: I had no doubt that the focus of the Clinton Administration was Bosnia. The Administration's effort as well as a very sincere effort by Warren Christopher, was to try to understand that Europe after the Cold War was different. We used NATO procedures and felt close to the Europeans through our values. Operationally the U.S. would lead and NATO would take whatever policy prescriptions we laid on the table and go forth. In May of 1993, Warren Christopher went to NATO with stops at several European NATO capitals with a proposal to deal with Bosnia, but nevertheless to have NATO deal with Bosnia. It was called "Lift and Strike." This "Lift and Strike" policy was to lift the arms embargo and strike at warring parties that would violate a ceasefire. Christopher was unlike those Secretaries of State who preceded him in the Cold War, whose message to NATO was: "This is what the United States has in mind; we'd like you to agree." During the Cold War the NATO representatives would argue around the table and then they would agree to the U.S. proposal. Christopher was different. He sought to build a consensus on this "Lift and Strike" policy before actually proposing it.

When he arrived in Brussels for the NATO meeting in May of 1993, he thought that he would have some consensus. However, the opposite, quite shockingly occurred. Despite his forward leaning, new look at the new Europe, by a new post Cold War America by the new administration, the Europeans didn't like this lift and strike idea because it actually meant using military force against the Serbs and other warring parties. So they ganged up on Warren Christopher and attacked him during the meeting and rejected the American policy. Christopher was angry and the rejection became a key event in determining Christopher's orientation towards the Europeans. The Europeans' effort to bring themselves together was only successful in blocking something that the U.S. wanted. It set a tone for our relationship and not a very good

tone at all for the relationship that was to follow. Bosnia became the defining issue of our relationship.

So we came up with another idea of the Contact Group, bringing the key countries together to talk in the smaller group, to try and create a consensus and to work the policy through. But Christopher did indeed have a strategic vision at the beginning of the administration, on this issue, on Bosnia and security in Europe, and was torpedoed. And had to go back to the drawing board then and come up with something else. Christopher did not return to Germany again until September 1996.

Q: During this '92-'93 period, what were the developments on the ground, as far as European commitment and UN commitment in Bosnia?

BINDENAGEL: The issue played out in a couple of ways. One, it played out drawing on the historical connections among the British, French and Russians with the Serbs as well as between the Germans with the Croatians. These historical connections played a very important role in creating tensions between the UN sending forces and the Bosnian receiving states. UN hat or no UN hat, there was no consensus on the use of force or whether use of force is even legitimate. Only after the bombing that ended the fighting and led to the Dayton Accords was a certain understanding that use of force had a role. The Europeans in Bosnia, under the UN/IFOR mandate, debating incessantly over the use of force. In the German case, the Germans were as you mentioned earlier were having this problem with their constitution and allowable military deployments. They had a constitution that in practice for 45 years had led them to not use their military as a tool of diplomacy. When they had an opportunity to deploy military forces in the Gulf War, they declined. Germany, knowing the agony and the implications of not participating militarily in the Bosnian conflict, although it was outside its own borders, was determined to find the proper role. When it came to Bosnia and especially after the Genscher proposal for recognition of Croatia and Slovenia had failed to end the violence, they were looking for some other way to deal with the issue. The Germans were confronted with incremental steps leading to increasing military action. They had overcome the first, which was their participation in sanction in the Adriatic? They had sought and won a court ruling that German military could participate. This set the pattern for a process of political and legal steps for greater Bundeswehr participation in out-of-area operations. Next was the decision on Luftwaffe crews flying AWACS missions over Hungary, which is outside of the NATO area. That mission was also acceptable.

Q: AWACS being?

BINDENAGEL: The airborne warning and air control system, a radar system, which we were using to oversee the battlefield in the Balkans and to determine who was violating the no-fly areas. It was not a combat role. The Germans took themselves again to court, to gain court acceptance of the political decision. Then it came to the question of Bundeswehr participation in the IFOR. This debate took them up through the summer of 1994.

In the fall of 1993 and the spring of 1994 the debate was over Partnership for Peace. That was a sideline in the first instance on how to get partners in a multinational peacekeeping force in Bosnia. The State Department was in favor of using these countries but not altering the structure

of NATO. The Pentagon preferred not to have them in NATO at all, and not to have them engaged at all, but to have them as a separate organization. So, Partnership for Peace became a partnership, actually from August 1993 when we decided to participate until we came to NATO debate in the summer of 1994, the issue was how do you use the East Central European countries. They were directly effected; we didn't want them to become NATO members.

You may recall that we discussed the bilateral effort to deal with this issue in the fall of 1993, when Frank Wisner, the Under Secretary of Defense for policy met with his counterpart, State Secretary Jörg Schönbohm. They met in Berlin and I was a part of the delegation. Wisner was there to prepare for the Defense Minister's meeting in Travemunde. The issue Partnership for Peacekeeping; we were trying to develop a peacekeeping force that wasn't a part of NATO, that was a part of the UN, where you could draw peacekeeping forces from other countries and send them and deploy them and so on. Frank Wisner and Jörg Schönbohm sat down and came up with a proposal. As State Department official I of course had to oppose any structural change and particularly one that would change the nature of NATO. But in the end they came up with a proposal that they took to the Defense Ministers in Travemunde, where they proposed "Partnership for Peacekeeping." Partnership for Peacekeeping outside of NATO, maybe in a long term step towards NATO, but a separate thing in itself. Of course, the minute they made this proposal, it became entangled in the Bosnia versus NATO debate over structure. An elaborate discussion ensued in the Department of State over work-plans and which countries would be invited to participate. As you can imagine the debate was endless over duties, the terms of reference, rules of engagement and all those normal things that occur in creating a military force. The workplans dominated the debate, not NATO enlargement, for most of the end of 1993 and the beginning of 1994. This was also the case for the German-American relationship as well as the NATO debate between the State Department and the Pentagon.

The other idea that came up at that time was the concept of using of European forces with American resources at NATO on a European-lead operation called the "Combined Joined Task Forces," CJTF. That force was being batted back and forth, but the Europeans didn't move very far with that because they wanted American combat troops.

Q: What was happening '92 to '94 on the ground, I'm little confused with the time, in Bosnia? There was a period of time when there were particularly French and British troops which were taking casualties and everything else, and were absolutely ineffective, the UN. It will take a long time before anybody will ever want to put their troops under the UN again. Was this happening at that time? We are taking about the siege of Sarajevo, which was on TV every day, showing armored vehicles sort of sitting there while atrocities were being committed.

BINDENAGEL: The UN Force, without the rules of engagement necessary to end the fighting, were absolutely ineffective. There was on going ethnic cleansing and genocide. There was an armed conflict. The UN had placed its forces into stand between the warring factions, but didn't give the commanders the right to shoot. They had the "double key" decision – that the local commander would make the decision that he would defend himself and then he would go up to higher command, at the political level to get approval for that. As a result they could not defend themselves. They stood between the warring parties, getting shot by the both sides, taking some severe casualties, and were not stopping the fighting at all. They were being bypassed, and that

was the situation in '92-'93 that IFOR faced.

Politically in Germany the other debates were about the German Bundeswehr, the largest military in Europe, which was not allowed to be legally deployed out-of-area. Working towards the summer of 1994, on July 12 1994 I believe, President Clinton came to Berlin and during that meeting, the German Supreme Court in Karlsruhe decided the legal cases about German military deployments. It said that Germany indeed could send its forces as a part of the alliance to other area. President Clinton announced this decision, and the Chancellor of Germany said that doesn't mean "Germans to the front."

Q: These were both sort of spontaneous?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, we did not know what or when the decisions would come and the reactions were very spontaneous. You could see there that the Germans were struggling with their military role as a key component to their role in Europe. Everyone else was looking at them skeptically to determine where they would fit in Europe and how they the Germans would exercise power in the future, including military power.

In the meantime in Bosnia, the Serbs and the Croats and the Bosnians continued their unrestrained fighting. It wasn't until we decided that we have to do more and moved to deploy US troops in SFOR that the situation began to change. We refused to give command to the UN, we wanted the NATO command. We wanted to resolve the Bosnia conflict with the right to use force. The change coincided with the departure of Ambassador Holbrooke from Germany in 1994 and his appointment as Assistant Secretary of European Affairs. He was joined by three key players at the State Department Bob Frasure, at Pentagon Joe Cruz, and at the White House Nelson Drew or Sandy Vershbow. Coordination improved immediately among the three agencies on this issue. The meeting of the minds came with Holbrooke on the ground constantly dealing with the individual players and the Pentagon and the NSC and the State Department. He would focus on the issues. When the Croatians made invaded, the US decided not to oppose that invasion. While it was not a "green" light, it was certainly a "yellow" light for the Croatians. Holbrooke also knew at that time that force was necessary and decided that we had to stop fighting by use of military force. Bombing the Serbs followed. It was effective, short, but effective. After the fighting stopped, the negotiations began that ended up in the Dayton process.

The Bosnia debate ran parallel all the way through this. At the same time the NATO enlargement debate began…

Q: This was still during the '92-'94 period?

BINDENAGEL: Yes, Bosnia was ever present during this 1992-94 period. After the President's visit in July 1994, as Holbrooke was leaving Bonn, we had the New Traditions Meeting, which we were talking about earlier, where Secretary Perry and Minister Ruhe debated whether to support new members in NATO. After that September meeting, Holbrooke left and we continued the NATO enlargement debate. We already had in January 1994 decision at NATO, in principle to talk about new members. In that September meeting we had the Vice President and the Chancellor as well as Minister Ruhe and Secretary Perry, saying, "Yes, we should start this

process." By the beginning of 1995, we were talking about first principles for new members. We re-examined the Washington Treaty for NATO requirement and asked the new aspirants: "These are the principles you have to adhere to, for NATO membership, can you meet them?" We began to see a debate, a very positive debate over criteria among those Eastern European countries that had their own ethnic and other conflicts even as they were hopeful to join NATO. Hungary and Romania had ethnic minorities and conflicts that had traditionally been flash points, which we would not accept as imports into NATO. They had to resolve these issues. We began to talk about these specific things that were necessary to join NATO.

Q: Was there thinking…, I'm sure that within the Pentagon, the professional military, they had been looking into what had been happening in Bosnia under UN command, and in the State and all, was this beyond, I mean there was always the political debate that we don't want to commit American troops under UN command. This is a very political thing. But looking at it from professional side, both State and military, taking one look at what happened there and saying "Hell, no." NATO is not to be used as a peacekeeping instrument with American troops. We had already gone through the Somalia business, or had just finished that. Was this sort of in the thinking?

BINDENAGEL: Certainly we didn't want any UN command structure, particularly after the "dual key" experience. It was not just the fact that UN command of U.S. soldiers did not play well in the U.S.; it just didn't work. We could only be effective if NATO was in command, and we were in charge of NATO. We prevailed to have NATO forces with and American general in charge in Bosnia. He has a subordinate general from Russia, who after his assignment in Bosnia for the American general was actually promoted, which was a good thing for the Russian, but also a sign that it was a good relationship. Symbolically such a U.S. – Russian relationship illustrated the changes that were happening. But for us, only an American commander of American forces, in political terms, was acceptable.

Q: I think one of the things, I talked to somebody else who was involved as a political adviser to general Schwarzkopf during the Gulf War, which was only about two years before. When the French sent an expeditionary force and they found they couldn't practically operate because they had been kind of cousins to NATO, but they didn't have the communication, when they went out to bomb they had to send an American plane out to lead them… I mean, they had realized how far away they had drifted from being an effective military force.

BINDENAGEL: That was reflected in the comments that I heard from U.S. and German military officers. After the Gulf War fiasco, the French military wanted to be a part of the Bosnia team. They wanted to be able to be an effective fighting force. And they knew from that experience in the Gulf War that they would not be outside of NATO. And I think probably this led to Jacques Chirac's initial overtures to NATO after he came into office.

FRANK G. WISNER
Under-Secretary of State for International Security Affairs, State Department
Washington, DC (1992-1994)

Ambassador Frank G. Wisner was born in New York in 1938. He graduated from Princeton University in 1961. He was stationed in Saigon, Dinh Tuong Province, Tuyen Duc Province, Tunis, Algiers, and Dacca. He later served as Ambassador to Zambia, Egypt, the Philippines, and India. Ambassador Wisner was interviewed by Richard L. Jackson on March 22, 1998.

Q: You were also worried about Ukraine?

WISNER: I went to Ukraine to try to begin to build the basis of an understanding, for we were going to be reducing nuclear arms that were held in Ukraine, as well as building a strong Ukraine which could survive in independence. Even though the weapons were held by the Russians, we needed strong Ukrainian participation, as well as the various Nunn-Lugar programs to reduce the whole nuclear shadow over the former Soviet Union. That was the first of my major undertakings in the six months plus that I was in the job. The second was Bosnia. Though I was not a principal on Bosnia and Arnie Kantor, my ever brilliant and able colleague as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, was in the lead, nonetheless, it kept falling to me as the duties were shared on the Seventh Floor. We were still determined to stay out of Bosnia and not commit American troops to Bosnia. That was President Bush's view; however, he was beginning to relent and argue that we should be in a posture of helping to support our allies, if they had to remove their forces, to maintain a strong humanitarian presence, to begin to deliver humanitarian relief with military means, but to allow the Europeans, together with the United Nations, to play the principal role. This policy was beginning to run threadbare. No number of conferences that we could help host or warnings seemed really to be slowing the pace of Serb depredations, and the job was left largely undone and left over for the Clinton Administration. Without a new political mandate, George Bush clearly felt he had no standing to make a new policy start and intensify American intervention and pressure in the Bosnian context.

Q: Did the Egyptians and other Arab friends of yours come to you with the paradox of apparent US passivity in the face of atrocities against Muslims?

WISNER: They talked about it. And you would find it in the Egyptian press, and there were arguments in favor of greater activism, but I never felt that the Arabs were deeply affected. I felt the pressure more sharply in this regard from the Turks, who have a Bosnian population in their midst. The second issue was Haiti where, rather than bite the bullet and face the fact that the Cedras regime was not going to reform itself, we chose to try to slow the flow of refugees to the United States by building a naval cordon sanitaire around Haiti. We aimed at trying to keep Cedras on a straight and narrow path, without coming to terms with the fact that the regime had to go. We had been in a lot of stressful circumstances at the end of an administration. I didn't find a lot of desire to roll our sleeves up any more in Haiti and plunge in, and we were unwilling to do so in Bosnia.

Somalia was the exception where the famine conditions, brought about by protracted drought, were really wreaking the most horrible havoc. After for a long time resisting serious intervention, at the very end of the Bush Administration, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Pentagon relented and decided on an American military intervention in Somalia aimed at feeding Somalis in the

most affected areas, with a certain amount of military screen. An international coalition had been built, and I had been given heavy responsibility in this regard. Now the job that was left to the Clinton administration was to extract this feeding mission from Somalia and to take the next step politically. The mobilization for Somalia, the mobilization of the international coalition, the delivery of troops and forces to the dangerous Mogadishu and into the countryside, occupied much of my time as the Administration drew to a close. These issues, plus the ordinary issues of who would be the next ambassadors as the D Committees met and things like that, filled up what turned out to be a very busy six months at the end of my time with the Bush Administration. The Bush Administration ended, and the Clinton team came in. Briefly, on Inauguration Day, I was Acting Secretary of State. I had already been approached both by the incoming team to be told that I would not be asked to stay on as Under Secretary, that I would be replaced by Lynn Davis and to be asked by Les Aspin, my old friend from Vietnam, Congressman, Secretary of Defense-Designate, to join him as Under Secretary for Policy in the Pentagon. I agreed to go to the Pentagon and to join Les. I crossed over the Potomac shortly after the inauguration and joined the Pentagon's ranks and took over while waiting for confirmation. My confirmation was delayed by nearly five months, while the State Department investigators gave the clearance to the FBI and to the White House, and I could finally be cleared out of State. When that was finally done, I became Under Secretary and served for the balance of Les Aspin's tenure as Secretary of Defense.

Q: Was that hold-up, Frank, because of different Pentagon security procedures? Or just the incoming Clinton Administration's procedures?

WISNER: No, I had been accused of importing from the Philippines weapons that I had in fact declared were antiques, number one, malfunctioning, number two, and, three, I had declared them to customs. But, by the time the State Department investigators got their teeth into the matter, it took them a hell of a long time to get it out. It was cleared up in the end and it went into the history books. I remember Rocky Suddarth, deputy in the Inspector General's office, who was, after he left, telling me that they were looking for a “trophy head.” hose days.

The beginning of any administration is a complex period. The President was finding his style. The Pentagon was under a lot of pressure. The President had already made it a high profile issue, right at the outset, when the gays-in-the-military issue set upon us. In addition, on the international scene the Bosnian problem overshadowed virtually everything else, Haiti and Somalia. These three issues dominated my time in the Pentagon. They dominated them in the following ways: In Bosnia, we did everything we could to bring our influence to bear without having to involve the United States in direct action. As the months wore on and the killing and slaughtered intensified, our options began to run out. There was no desire on the part of Colin Powell, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to see American forces committed. He believed we would be on a slippery slope -- he certainly convinced me of that -- toward a troop-type war in the Balkans, that I thought would be a pretty horrible outcome. There wasn't much desire, therefore, to heavy-up our presence, though we did go into Macedonia to try to stabilize it along the margins, start flying air caps, shooting down air marauders on the Serbian side. But, when trying to threaten action, when the Serbs -- almost certainly the Serbs -- mortared the marketplace in Sarajevo, killing a lot of innocent people...it took the horror of Srebrenica, even later, to finally bring us to make the decisions we took. This was after my time and bomb, and

that led to Dayton and where we are today. The new Administration wished that Bush had solved the problem, but there was no solving it. There was very little domestic support for intervention, and the Europeans were just unwilling and fundamentally unable, for at the same time what we were watching was a decline of European capabilities to conduct defense. Europeans, faced with budget problems brought on by their protracted economic downturn, were cutting back their military. It was very hard for them to imagine how to undertake an operation in the Balkans with a diminished military capability and then NATO had long depended on the U.S. for strategic lift, for command and control, for C³I, the communications capabilities. We eventually began to turn this, in my time in the Pentagon, into some creative policy outcomes -- combined joint task forces where we would plan for future contingencies under which if the United States decided it wouldn't be involved politically, we would provide strategic lift, C³I, and allow the Europeans to provide troops, so that you could have the command even in European hands with the ultimate commander of course being the NATO commander. It was a period of some creativity as well, as NATO was tested so strongly in this Balkans operation -- the first time they had ever been committed to flying air caps and acting out of area in a concerted fashion, which happened on Clinton's watch. To rethink NATO's own broad future and purposes, we came up with ways to accommodate the security map of Europe. The Pentagon gave birth to this, and Chas Freeman was very effective in this regard, helped see it through -- the concept of the Partnership for Peace. NATO expansion was not exactly our priority. In the Pentagon, we were aiming at trying to build a new relationship with the Russian military forces. The President made the political decision and, at the 1994 NATO meetings in Brussels, he in effect pushed the alliance, and then, by going to Eastern Europe, set the stage for the commitment to expand to include Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Less clear to us were our goals in Haiti, where the Pentagon, in my time, was deeply skeptical about Aristide's pretensions, his capability of bringing stability. It took a strong, strong set of decisions from the White House and State to push us, after one failed attempt to land peace keeping elements, to really move to get rid of the Cedras regime, which was where you had to go, if you were going to take the country back in hand and get the U.N. in there. We finally crossed those rubicons. I had my doubts at the time that it was the best use of American prestige. I never believed we would be able to stabilize Haiti. We still haven't; by the way, I now believe I was wrong and that we did exactly the right thing in nudging Mr. Cedras out of the door and Aristide, his successor, in. Cedras and his gang could not be reformed. More importantly, the United States bears a heavy responsibility for the stability of the Caribbean area. We have had to intervene in the past and will do so again. The job comes with being the US. Yes, I admit it, Strobe Talbott was right about Haiti and I was wrong.

Q: Les Aspin was criticized, at least in the press, for being overly conceptual and for bringing an academic style to the Pentagon. How was it for you coming from State, how was it to be plonk in the military culture?

WISNER: I know that criticism of Les. His style was informal, loose; he was not a crisp decision maker. He liked to explore issues, explore them and reexplore them in seminar style. That ability to come to terms with a decision very, very quickly wasn't his. His management style was not precise. He asked me to try to set a policy shop with really many, many, too many people in it and overlapping jurisdictions, and he had people in mind for all of the jobs, and they didn't all fit together terribly well, so it was a tough, tough job. Moreover, in the critical beginning months I wasn't even confirmed. I think it was not a great success. And I say that with sadness because I

was a friend of Les' and didn't do more, was unable to think of ways to do more, to help Les through these sets of dilemmas, to help Les grasp this nettle in a more effective manner. I considered it not one of my great moments in public service. I found the time in the Pentagon, on the other hand, absolutely fascinating. I have long admired our military, have been associated with it in Vietnam and in many other assignments around the world and will hold my experience of service with the military very close, very dear to me. Moreover, I was proud to be associated with hard debates and real choices over defense resources, Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, European security, Asian security, normalization with Vietnam.

GEORGE F. WARD JR.
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary-International Organizations
State Department
Washington, DC (1992-1996)

George F. Ward Jr. was born in the borough of Queens, NY in 1945. He graduated from the University of Rochester in 1965. After a four-year term with the United States Marine Corps, Mr. Ward Joined the Foreign Service in 1969. During his service he has been to Hamburg, Genoa, Rome, Bonn, and was Ambassador to Namibia. He was interviewed in 2001 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Did Yugoslavia start to come apart when you were there?

WARD: Yes.

Q: This is very important. As a Yugoslav hand, I've interviewed Warren Zimmermann and spent a lot of time in Yugoslavia. Genscher does not come across as the number one hero.

WARD: And neither do the Germans, but neither were we. It was an episode worth thinking about. As Yugoslavia started to fall apart, we in the embassy got very little either in terms of information or instructions to present demarches. I assumed that this was because someone else was staying in touch with the Germans at a high level. In the major European embassies, you have "cabinet lines," direct hookups between the NSC and the National Security Advisors on the European side, and between the heads of government and the President. So, I figured, if we're not discussing these important matters where we clearly have differences of view with the Germans, then this must be being done at a very high level. That illusion was swept away one day in early December 1991, when with the EU, led by the Germans, was on the verge of recognizing Croatia and Slovenia. Kohl's coalition partner, the Bavarian CSU, was pushing particularly hard for this. We received an instruction from the Department to go and tell the Germans in no uncertain terms not to go forward with recognition, to stop doing what they were doing. I was absolutely dismayed. I felt, here we were, not having had the kind of discussions you need to prepare the ground, and we were being asked to present an ultimatum. I delivered that demarche to Jurgen Chrobog, who was political director then and later ambassador to Washington. Chrobog, who became a good friend, later told me, "George, I almost gave you that paper back and told you to leave my office." He was so angry, and I think justly so, because he

felt that, here are these Americans, who have not involved us in a dialogue about the future of Yugoslavia in the way they should have, coming in to tell me the day before an important EU meeting is going to happen not to execute the policy that we have carefully planned. The next day, the Germans did exactly what they had planned. They led the EU in the decision to recognize Croatia and Slovenia. We followed suit by recognizing Bosnia.

Q: Looking at it at the time, how did this develop? The phrase came in, particularly during this operation of "Mission Creep."

WARD: Mission creep and nation building.

Q: Could you talk about what those both mean and also how you saw that and your role?

WARD: I believe that the charge of mission creep is justified in the case of Somalia. We went there with a mission to deliver humanitarian supplies. That later, during the Clinton Administration, turned into a mission to effect a change in the political dynamics by hunting down the leader of one of the principal clans there, Mohammed Aideed. It seems to me that there was an incrementalism that could be thought of as mission creep, one mission sliding into another.

Now, the question of nation building is more or less a canard. In any peacekeeping situation, what you are doing is trying to build a capable state. If you're going to call that nation building, so be it. But, in fact, peacekeeping is about putting things back together, taking states that are failed or divided or in conflict and helping end the conflict and then putting a society back on its feet. Unfortunately because of Somalia, nation building has become a very negative term. Even today, I find that when people want to say it in meetings, they'll call it by another word or apologize for using the term. But in fact we are doing nation building in Kosovo and in Bosnia.

Q: In Serbia, when Serbia was being very nasty under Milosevic and we were saying we were going to do something, the Serbs would taunt us with the number 18.

WARD: You're correct. As the drama in Bosnia was playing out, we seemed to be intent upon finding ways not to intervene, not to use force there. Oddly enough, the resolution that authorized the UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslavia actually was a Chapter 7 resolution. For me, it was an interesting study in human psychology that very often both U.S. officials and UN officials referred to the mandate as a Chapter 6 mandate and literally refused to recognize that Chapter 7 authority was there for them to pick up if they wanted.

Q: The difference between Chapter 6 and Chapter 7…

WARD: Sorry for the jargon. Chapter Six is the part of the United Nations charter that pertains to peaceful settlement of disputes. Historically, Chapter Six has been the justification for peacekeeping operations, operations in which the only force authorized is self-protection. Peacekeeping forces may not use force to impose their will on the contending sides. Chapter Seven deals with threats to international peace and security, and has been used as the authorizing authority for peace enforcement operations such as, for example, the November 1993 operation

in Somalia and Desert Storm.

Q: There was horrendous example after horrendous example of what were warlords, particularly on the Serbian side, around Sarajevo, who were pushing the United Nations aside. It seemed like the United Nations' main object was to keep out of the line of fire and maybe even prolong the situation.

WARD: The historical record will show that Milosevic managed the actions of the Bosnia Serbs pretty skillfully from Belgrade. They did shove the UN around from time to time. Milosevic successfully modulated his bullying so as never to create a situation in which the UN would have been forced to act against him in a definitive way. He managed on the one hand to wage what some have called genocide while at the same time maintaining decent diplomatic relations with all the players in this game.

Q: Was there a concurrent, besides the United Nations, European Union operation going on?

WARD: The European Union discussed the matter extensively in its political fora. They basically operated through the United Nations. No decisive actions were agreed until the situation degenerated to a point at which the plight of the Bosnian Muslims trapped in Sarajevo became truly dramatic. The pace of Serb ethnic cleansing picked up and Serb forces used force to attempt to cow the UN peacekeeping force into acquiescence. When the Serbs took UN peacekeepers hostage, NATO finally intervened, at first with air strikes, which caused the Serbs to become more entrenched and take more hostages and put them at sites that they felt likely to be bombed, and finally with the Rapid Reaction Force, which for the first time placed NATO combatant forces on the ground with the mission of breaking the siege around Sarajevo, which was done successfully. Then concurrently, there was a major effort underway to strengthen the Croatian army using private U.S. resources, companies basically made up of retired American and other military personnel who trained the Croatian army to the point where the Croatians were able to launch an offensive against Serb forces in the Knin area, causing the Serb population to flee and for the first time introducing into Milosevic's calculation the possibility that he might be militarily defeated. All of these factors drove the situation toward the Dayton negotiation.

Q: What was your role until major force went in?

WARD: The role of IO before the operation became a NATO operation was to manage Security Council business and U.S. participation and support for peacekeeping operations. We were involved in writing an interminable series of Security Council resolutions. That business was a fairly disheartening endeavor because we made a lot of empty threats. The Security Council was forever instructing the Secretary General to take steps in peacekeeping without providing the resources. For example, there was a resolution passed in late 1994 to protect so-called safe areas within Bosnia. Certain towns that were under extreme military pressure from the Serbs were designated as safe areas, among them Srebrenica. Tragically, some of these towns became the opposite of safe areas. An expansion of UNPROFOR for the purpose of protecting the safe areas was authorized. The Security Council instructed the Secretary General to get the job done. The fact is that hardly any country volunteered to provide the extra forces needed for the operation.

So, the UN, even when it had the will, did not have the wherewithal. There were few profiles in courage during this period.

Q: What was this doing to you and your coworkers? You've got a situation which, if nothing else, was seen on TV with snipers, particularly Serbian snipers, happily shooting at women running across the street. Then you had things like the marketplace explosion and then Srebrenica, which killed about 5,000 and was a real genocide, where Dutch troops were too few and didn't act very well. Whatever it was, it didn't work out well. But here you have what appears to be a Congress that's not giving you much support. In fact, Congress is spending most of its time going after the UN, going after government workers. They were pretty nasty people. This was the Newt Gingrich revolution. This had to have some effect on you.

WARD: I stayed in IO for four years. I find multilateral diplomacy interesting, a fascinating multi-tiered game. In my view, the U.S. government did not lead in the way we should have early in the Yugoslav episode. A lot of people should share in the blame. We were driven by events rather than driving them. We had the wherewithal, especially early in the game, to militarily dominate the situation. We failed to do it. The kind of military force that was later used, if used earlier, would have saved many lives. The Serb forces in Bosnia were never large, nor were they very effective militarily.

Q: As an old Yugoslav hand, it seemed like the Serbs spent an awful lot of their time sitting on top of hills shooting at artillery in a haphazard way like a bunch of mountaineer rednecks.

WARD: You can think of them as mountaineer rednecks or simply thugs who were bound together in a cause. Had they encountered serious military force, I just have to believe the situation would have been very different. At one point, having read an analysis that showed something like 30,000 Serb troops on the ground in Bosnia, I asked the three-star general who was the J-3 at the Joint Staff, "What would it take to defeat this force?" He said, "About 100,000 people." I said, "That would be possible for NATO." He said, "Yes." The reason it didn't happen is political.

Q: Going back to the Balkans, what happened on the ground in the Balkans that got NATO into it?

WARD: It was a progressive process driven by events. After the atrocity in the market in Sarajevo and with the constant sniping at innocents in the streets of that city, the U.S. and our closest allies decided that NATO military intervention was necessary. NATO indicated to the United Nations that it was willing to put together the Rapid Reaction Force, which consisted in large part of British artillery and U.S. airpower. There were some British troops on the ground also. That force was authorized by the UN to break the siege of Sarajevo. Even then, it was very tough to get money through the Congress. I remember the day when we had a call from the Secretary's office saying that Richard Holbrooke and I had to go up to the Senate to testify about the proposed appropriation to fund the Rapid Reaction Force. It was an interesting experience to go up to the Hill with Richard Holbrooke, who was of course the center of attention at the hearing. He succeeded in freeing up the money for the Force, but the Congress eventually placed stringent limitations on our ability to spend money for peacekeeping. Perhaps influenced to some

degree by opinions they heard from U.S. military sources, Senators grilled us about objectives, end states, and exit strategies. They wanted us to predict the future in some detail.

After the Rapid Reaction Force was deployed, the situation in Sarajevo improved, but there was another setback yet to come – the massacre in Srebrenica. The Dutch UNPROFOR battalion in Srebrenica was nervous. They felt isolated and knew that other peacekeepers had been held hostage. They had been deployed to Srebrenica in fulfillment of the Secretary General's pledge to create and protect "safe areas" for Bosniacs (Bosnian Muslims). However, they did not have the strength necessary to fulfill their mission. A much larger force of Serbs surrounded them. To make matters worse, Bosniac militants used the safe areas as bases from which to launch attacks against Serbs. The Serbs succeeded in surrounding Srebrenica and demanded that the Dutch leave. The Dutch finally complied, leaving vulnerable the people they had been protecting. As we all know, thousands of men and boys were killed either on the spot or as they attempted to make their way back to Bosniac lines. That massacre was an action-forcing event that led to increased NATO and U.S. willingness to use force and also helped convince us to use our diplomatic clout in order to put together a real peace negotiation.

DAVID R. ADAMS
Office of the Undersecretary of State
Washington, DC (1993-1995)

Mr. Adams was born in Washington, DC and raised in Virginia and abroad. He was educated at John Carroll, William and Mary and George Washington Universities. Mr. Adams joined USAID in 1973 in Washington, DC. He served in Washington and abroad, dealing primarily with matters concerning Latin American countries and Kosovo. His foreign assignments include Bangladesh, Guatemala and Haiti, where he served as USAID Mission Director. Mr. Adams was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: Were you picking up the almost revolt within the State Department of not doing something about Bosnia?

ADAMS: Oh yes. That was similar to Iraq later. I know that a lot of people have similar sentiments now. But yes you are right, you are very right, and I was one of those, believe me. As time dragged on we thought it was just criminal because unlike Iraq, in Bosnia the same thing with Haiti….if you knew anything about the situation, you knew that the chances for U.S. casualties if the interventions were handled right were minimal. That despite Somalia, that showed the foreign policy inexperience of the president and the people under him. I think and it has been written about. Clinton was thinking this situation was like Somalia with Haiti and Bosnia. He just didn't want to take the political risk. Eventually he was convinced, I think Christopher and Strobe Talbot were instrumental in this, to move him forward. Now I tried a long-shot argument, given my conviction that the refugee issues was the core issue in Haiti that made Clinton move to get Aristide back to Haiti. But in Bosnia there was a terrible refugee situation for Europe. There were hundreds of thousands of Bosnians and people from other

Balkan countries involved in the war. Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia had people fleeing to Western Europe in lesser numbers. In Germany especially there were a huge number of refugees. The U.S. had accepted all of 6,000 I think, in the summer of 1995. So some of us argued assiduously that we either intervene, or work out a NATO intervention. Not just bombing, a ground intervention because bombing alone just wouldn't be effective. Or the U.S. was going to have to accept thousands and thousands of refugees from Bosnia. Those ideas made it to Talbot and Christopher, I know that, because Johnstone gave one or more of my papers to them. Gelbard gave some feedback that these arguments were very persuasive. So they may have taken it forward. Again I am not claiming credit here. Christopher and Holbrook did the heavy lifting, as did Gelbard.

Q: Did you get the feeling that there was a lot of internal debate? I mean or was this just one of these things where both sides are percolating up to the secretary.

ADAMS: Yeah, there was a lot of debate. There were a number of people, and I wasn't linked up with all of them by a long shot, but there were people in the EUR bureau that were outraged. Folks in the field, in the embassies within those countries but also in the surrounding European countries. It wasn't just with us. The Europeans were very attentive too. It was a European problem.

Q: Yeah, well the Europeans grabbed the problem and then wouldn't do anything. I mean they upped it.

ADAMS: Yeah, so it is not. I understand where some conservatives are coming from when they say here "you humanitarian interventionist types want us to be policeman of the world. What about others who should be?"

But eventually there was a coalition that was put together that was quite effective. A similar situation happened in Kosovo; I went back to AID for Kosovo and was the Kosovo coordinator for a time. We had the same thing where the administration took its time and tried bombing and that didn't work.

RUDOLF V. PERINA
Charge d'Affaires
Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1993-1996)

Ambassador Perina was born in Czechoslovakia when that country was under communist control. He escaped with his family to Morocco, then Switzerland and finally the United States. The ambassador was educated at the University of Chicago and Columbia University. Entering the Foreign Service in 1974, Mr. Perina specialized in Military-Political Affairs at posts abroad, including Moscow, Berlin, Brussels, Vienna and Belgrade. In Washington he served on the National Security Council, specializing in Soviet issues. From 1998 to 2001 Mr. Perina was US Ambassador to Moldova. Ambassador Perina was interviewed by

Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2006.

PERINA: …and I went to Belgrade [in the summer of 1993].

Q: Who was the Ambassador?

PERINA: There was no Ambassador. Warren Zimmermann had left the year before, and he had left the DCM, Bob Rackmales, as Chargé. The war was underway. Yugoslavia had broken up. We had broken off diplomatic relations with Serbia Montenegro, although we had an Embassy there. Bob Rackmales had negotiated that the Embassy and staff would continue to have diplomatic rights and privileges but in a legal sense we did not have diplomatic relations because we did not recognize Serbia-Montenegro as the successor state to Yugoslavia. It was a very strange and unique relationship. Bob Rackmales was Chargé d'Affaires but had been assigned originally to the DCM position, and I was initially assigned to the DCM slot as his replacement. However, I went to post to be the Chargé d'Affaires and was reassigned after my first year to be the Chief of Mission as a permanent Chargé, so that the DCM slot could be vacated and filled. By then it was clear that we would not have normal diplomatic relations, and an accredited ambassador, for a long time. When I was assigned to the job, I was told in Washington by my personnel counselor that there was a 50-50 chance that I would be closing the Embassy, that is to say that we would completely break off relations with Belgrade. This was one of the reasons that there weren't too many people anxious to go. The country was under UN sanctions. One could not even fly in because all international flights were cut off as part of the sanctions. I had to fly into Budapest and proceed to Belgrade by car. It was a very, very strange situation. The Embassy itself had been downsized by about 50% when Warren Zimmermann left so it had a much smaller staff than previously. I knew I would be working under very difficult conditions, under the threat of closing down the Embassy on short notice, and with a staff that was greatly downsized. There were also security concerns and plans for military evacuation of the Embassy if necessary. I had several special security people on the staff whose only job was to prepare for such an evacuation and be there to help carry it out. They had videotaped and mapped the residence and entire compound inside and out, identified landing areas for helicopters and so on.

Q: You were there from when to when?

PERINA: I was there from 1993 to the early spring of 1996. I ended up being there about two and a half years.

Q: Before you went, what was your impression of the situation in the former Yugoslavia? What was our policy?

PERINA: This was a time when the Bosnian War was going full force and all the reports of atrocities were hitting the Western media. These included the reports on the concentration camps, the mass rapes, the use of rape as an instrument of war, the sniper killings in Sarajevo, and so on. All of these reports were coming out and arousing public opinion, generally in an anti-Serb direction because most of the publicized atrocities seemed to be committed against Muslims by Serbs. This was the time when three or four State Department desk officers in a row resigned from the Department to protest that the U.S. was not taking stronger action against Serbia. There

was a feeling that the U.S. should be doing more to stop these atrocities, that it should intervene against the Serbs. It was a horrible time and horrible things were happening. The U.S. had started reacting to this, and military action by NATO was not ruled out. This was one of the reasons I was told there was a 50-50 chance of closing the Embassy.

There was also continuing tension over Kosovo. In December 1992, six months before I went out, Deputy Secretary Eagleburger gave Milosevic what came to be known as the "Christmas warning" that we would take action against Serbia proper in retaliation for any move against Kosovo. So U.S.-Serb relations were very bad, as you can imagine, and the State Department increasingly felt under pressure to do more to stop the killing in Bosnia. Our initial approach had been to try to stay out and let the Europeans take the lead. We felt that this was a good example of a regional conflict that the European Union should try to handle. But the European Union was not doing very much, and pressure was mounting on the U.S. by domestic public opinion to do something.

Q: I just finished interviewing Ron Neitzke. He served in Belgrade before but he was in Zagreb as Consul General at this time and then made Chargé for a year. He was saying that he very much felt unhappiness from the Department of State that he was reporting too many of these atrocities because the U.S. Government didn't want to get involved. He said he also felt he was up against what he called the Belgrade mafia, which was Eagleburger, Scowcroft and others with Yugoslav experience who had served there and felt close to the Serbs. Did you encounter any of this?

PERINA: It was ironic because there were a lot of Yugoslav experts at the top levels of the U.S. Government. But I did not feel such pressure. Of course, I was reporting from Serbia and most of the atrocities were happening in Bosnia. So I was not in a position to report on them. From Belgrade, we did follow developments in Kosovo and kept Washington informed on all reports of atrocities there. I did not get any signals that such information should not be reported. On the contrary, there was a lot of interest in Kosovo in our Congress so it was important for the Department to be fully up to speed.

Q: Oh, yes. This is where everything was happening. Were you given any special instructions when you went out?

PERINA: Apart from the possible need to close the Embassy, the instructions were just to survive. The UN sanctions were among the toughest possible. There were no airplane flights, nothing was supposedly allowed in. Now, of course, it was a porous border and you could buy a lot of stuff, but for the average person it was very difficult. For example, you couldn't buy gasoline. People had to go to Budapest and bring back gasoline in milk cartons, which they then often sold at roadside stands. There was also this rampant inflation going on as a result of the sanctions. When I arrived, the staff took me to a welcoming dinner in a restaurant and I couldn't believe how it was paid for. The economic counselor opened an attaché case that was just filled with stacks of bills, and he paid for the dinner with all of these bills. He just put them on the table, and we had to wait about 15 minutes while the waiters counted them. This inflation continued through my tenure because of the sanctions. Currency was continuously being devalued and reprinted in higher and higher denominations. The largest single bill that was

issued in my time there was 500 billion dinars, that's billion and not million. I have never yet seen a single bill of a higher denomination, even from the German inflation after World War I. When this bill was issued it was worth about $10. Within a week it was worth a dollar and within about 10 days it was worth a nickel. I have a stack of them which I kept as souvenirs. Basically, Yugoslav money became meaningless. Initially, of course, some people also profited by paying off debts and mortgages in worthless currency. There were rumors that Milosevic had paid off the mortgage on his personal house for a few hundred dollars.

Q: How did people survive?

PERINA: There was a black market primarily in German marks and to some degree in dollars. Most shop owners wanted to be paid in marks. If a person only had Yugoslav dinars, it was very difficult. A barter economy developed where people from the countryside paid with produce for manufactured goods and so on. There continued to be a stream of Western currency coming into the country from the many Serb guest workers in Western Europe, and especially Germany, who sent money back to their families. This basically sustained an entire black economy in hard currency. When I came back to the Department on consultations a couple of times, I brought back examples of the Serb currency—the bills denominated in millions and billions of dinars. People loved them, and Warren Christopher even passed some around at one of his morning staff meetings, as evidence of how the sanctions were working. But there was a flip side to the story. The sanctions destroyed the currency but the economy continued to function in some remarkable ways. For example, there continued to be a McDonalds's in Belgrade through the entire sanction period. It was no longer under franchise and had to procure the ingredients for their products locally, but one could not taste a difference from any other McDonald's hamburger. If one had hard currency, it was still possible to buy almost anything, including new Mercedes automobiles smuggled into the country. There were, of course, many criminal elements who soon figured out how to make such a system profitable for themselves through smuggling and similar activity. The sanctions thus contributed to a real criminalization of the society. Gangsters and criminals became wealthy and rose to the top, while average people suffered.

Q: How did the people eat and procure basic necessities?

PERINA: I think a lot of people relied on communities, on social contacts, on family. People in the countryside could raise their own food and were relatively self sufficient. They were less affected by the sanctions. Many city dwellers had come within one or two generations from villages where they still had relatives who could help them get food. Others relied on remittances from abroad for hard currency. Serbs are also very inventive and clever. They are survivors, like everyone else in the Balkans. In most cases, they found ways to beat the system, though it was hard.

The Embassy people were, of course, in a very privileged position. We had the hard currency, we had the ability to bring in gasoline, food and other commodities for Embassy use, so we did not really suffer. But some things were difficult. For example, we could not use the banking system for Embassy transactions because Serb banks were also under sanctions and thus had no links to foreign banks. Everything was on a cash basis. Even salaries of our local employees were paid in cash. About every two weeks, we sent a car to Budapest that would bring back tens of thousands

of dollars in cash, sometimes over a hundred thousand dollars. The cars were driven by Serb employees of the Embassy and had an American on board but no guards. They thus aroused no suspicion or interest. The whole system was based on secrecy. Otherwise, of course, local criminal warlords like the infamous Arkan would quickly have targeted these cars, and probably no number of guards could have protected them. At one point we had to put a new roof on the Embassy residence because it was leaking. This was a major repair and cost over a hundred thousand dollars. A car came from Budapest with the cash in a suitcase, and we paid for it that way. I remember telling Dick Holbrooke this story when I first met him in Budapest after he was nominated to be Assistant Secretary. He thought it was fascinating and already then took a special interest in the Yugoslav conflict. I spent an hour telling him stories from Belgrade, and that was how we first got to know one another. I just happened to be passing through Budapest when he was there with his wife, and I asked to meet with him.

Q: The Embassy was still in the same old compound?

PERINA: It was that same building, covering an entire block. We still used the main chancery but there were a lot of empty apartments in the other wings because the staff had been so downsized. The commissary was still active as well as the large cafeteria. In my first year, I was there without my wife so that my younger daughter, Alexandra, could finish high school in Virginia. I lived in the DCM residence because the main residence was under repair. That was the most difficult and bleakest year. In the second year, my wife joined me, and we moved to the main Embassy residence, which as you know is a beautiful building with a huge pool, tennis courts, a wonderful property. It was without a doubt the nicest residence we lived in through my entire career.

Q: What sort of a staff did you have? Did you have the equivalent of a DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission)?

PERINA: By and large, there was an excellent staff of very committed people. My first year I did not have a formal DCM because I was in the DCM position but I asked Jim Swigert, the head of the economic and political Section, to serve as the acting DCM. He was outstanding and helped me immensely because he had been there the previous year and provided continuity. When I moved into the chief of mission position as a permanent Chargé d'Affaires, I did recruit a DCM who was Larry Butler.

Q: How were you received by the Serbs when you got to Belgrade?

PERINA: Within a week or so of my arrival, I received my first instruction to deliver a demarche to Milosevic. I had never met him. We did not recognize him as president of Yugoslavia since we did not recognize Serbia-Montenegro as the successor state to former Yugoslavia. We did accept him as President of Serbia, and in that sense were allowed to call him "President." I was not an ambassador, and he knew that was done intentionally so as not to recognize him as a head of state with any presentation of credentials. I think Bob Rackmales had not seen him for quite a while before he left. So Milosevic really had not met with an American diplomat for some time. I put in a request to see him in order to deliver the message from Washington. Later in the same day, we received a response that Milosevic would not receive me and that we should just send

over the message in written form. I knew if I did that, it would set a precedent and make it difficult for me to ever get a meeting with him. I decided that we wouldn't send the message in written form. Instead, we sent back word that since I had been instructed to deliver the message personally to him, I would have to report his refusal to see me back to Washington and ask for new instructions. This was a bluff, of course, because Washington had not instructed me personally to deliver the message and would have accepted delivery of the message to him in any form. And I would have hated to tell the Department that I delayed delivering the first message assigned to me. But I decided just to tell Milosevic this and to wait 24 hours before sending the demarche in written form.

Well, the bluff worked. About three hours after we said that I would not deliver the message in writing, word came back that he would receive me that afternoon. I went over and I had my first meeting with Milosevic. Jim Swigert came along as the note taker. I delivered the demarche orally and also left a non-paper with the talking points to make sure he got the exact wording from Washington. This was the pattern I followed with all subsequent demarches. In fact, this first meeting ended with him telling me that he would receive me whenever I asked to see him. I never again had difficulty getting a meeting with him. He clearly wanted to engage with the United States and concluded that he could do so through me.

I cannot remember the exact content of that first demarche but it was along the same vein as numerous other messages I delivered that first year—basically all warning him against interference in Bosnia and sometimes warning him very bluntly that the U.S. would take action if Serbia continued to support the Bosnian Serbs militarily. I probably had well over a dozen meetings with him that first year. On the first few, I took Jim Swigert along but then I started seeing him one-on-one because he spoke more openly. His English was fluent so there was no need for interpreters. As I got to know him, the bizarre thing was that he was actually rather engaging. I think Dick Holbrooke found this later as well. It was quite intentional on Milosevic's part. He wanted to engage the U.S. because he knew that we were key to Western policy in the region. Dealing with him was very informal and completely unlike dealing with some stuffy head of state. In the meetings, he loved to drink Johnny Walker Black just straight on the rocks. He was a chain smoker and smoked these cigarillos, not cigarettes but sort of small cigars. For a few months that first year, he tried to quite smoking and complained of how difficult it was. He later started the habit again and smoked quite a bit by the time I was leaving Belgrade.

It took a while for someone to really see evidence of how strange he was. He was very skilled in ole playing. At first he would try to impress visitors with what a regular guy he was—drinking, smoking, and being very informal. He would stress his background as a banker and his contacts with American bankers when he visited the United States. He would drop names of New York bankers he allegedly knew and ask how they were. But then gradually, one could see that he was very strange. He rarely showed any emotion, even when discussing immense human suffering and tragedy. This was not only in relation to discussion of Muslims or Croats, but also to Serbs. I remember seeing him at the time the Serbs were expelled from the Krajina in Croatia, and there were these caravans coming into Belgrade of displaced Serbs with all their possessions on wagons and no place to go. I remember meeting with him, and he did not appear particularly concerned about them. There was no emotion about the tragedy and enormity of the conflict going on next door. In part, he wanted to show that he was very tough. But there was a genuine

lack of compassion that was truly frightening and that Warren Zimmermann also described in his book.

The other unusual thing that I soon learned about him was that he never flinched. Some of the demarches that I had to deliver during that first year were very, very tough as compared to normal diplomatic exchanges. In most countries I would probably have been expelled if I said those kinds of things to a president. The gist of some of these messages was that we think you are a war criminal and we're going to bomb the hell out of you unless you stop doing so and so. I am of course exaggerating, and they obviously did not use that language, but that was the unmistakable gist of the messages, particularly as Washington got more and more frustrated and angered with Milosevic. And I always delivered the full and exact text of the demarche. I summarized it orally and then gave him the written text, which he always read before responding. No matter how tough or threatening the message was, he would always just look up after reading it and say calmly "Well, you know, this is not true," and begin discussing it as though we were discussing the weather. He would never flinch and never get angry or show emotion. I think the intent again was to give the impression of being tough and unafraid himself. He would also look directly into your eyes when speaking or listening, and lean forward very close to give the impression of listening intently. It was a fairly intense look, and his eyes never wandered, but it was not a threatening or angry look but rather a type of "I am not afraid" look.

Q: You could almost say he was a psychopath.

PERINA: Well I am not a psychiatrist but he was certainly strange and unlike any other person I have ever dealt with. There were a couple of other strange things that later on became even more apparent. There was never any staff that you could see around him. I would come to his office, and the only people I ever saw were his bodyguards and one assistant named Goran Milinovic. I never saw anyone else—not a secretary, a receptionist, or any staffer other than Goran. Goran was this large muscular fellow with a beard, and he functioned as everything, including note taker. He would take copious notes at every meeting but he wrote so quickly that I cannot imagine they were legible. I think it was all for show. I don't believe Milosevic wanted notes of most of his meetings. When I came alone, then Goran did not sit-in on the meetings, and they were only one-on-one. This did change a bit later when Bob Frasure, our Deputy Assistant Secretary from Washington, started coming. In those meetings sometimes Milan Milutinovic, the Foreign Minister, and Chris Spiro who was an American advisor of Milosevic, would join. But the whole atmosphere of these sessions was very strange. Most heads-of-state want entourages to show their importance. With Milosevic, it was just the reverse.

The most bizarre episode I recall with Milosevic came one evening when he called up and asked me to join him for dinner. It was very strange to be invited like this by him, and to this day I do not know what he was trying to achieve other than to get closer to the United States and show how he wanted to work with us. This was in the period when Bob Frasure had started making visits to Belgrade, and the U.S. was starting to engage as the primary mediator of the Yugoslav conflict, replacing the Europeans. So Milosevic knew that the U.S. had become the key player on what happens in Yugoslavia. He called up, even though Bob Frasure was not in town at the time, and asked me to come over to one of the country houses and have dinner with him. We were having dinner, and he was his usual, chatty self, giving the appearance of a perfectly normal

person. And then in the middle of the conversation he said, "Did you know that Warren Zimmermann tried to have me assassinated?" I was stunned. I could not believe he said that and thought that he was perhaps testing me in some way. I answered "Mr. President, I know Warren Zimmermann. I know American policy. I don't want you to believe that. It isn't true." He said, "No, no. It's absolutely true. I have evidence that Warren Zimmermann was plotting with Vuk Draskovic to have me assassinated and we have tapes to prove this." Vuk Draskovic was probably the most prominent dissident in Serbia at that time, and I am sure Warren Zimmermann met with him, but the assassination charges were of course absurd and indicative of Milosevic's paranoia. From that time on I realized that he was in a completely different world. But it took a while, and incidents like this, to really understand how he saw the world and how paranoid he was because he was generally so good at being able to cover it up. I think he genuinely believed the Zimmermann story, though I have no idea what kinds of tapes he was talking about. I never got around to telling Warren Zimmermann that story. I'm sure he would have been amused by it.

Q: If he was so out of it, did Milosevic really understand what was happening in Bosnia?

PERINA: That I think he did, although of course he always tried to give the reverse impression— that he was an outsider looking in, just like all the rest of us. I remember that when I raised Srebrenica with him, the position that he took was roughly: "Why are you coming to me? Why do you think I am responsible? I'm doing my best to try to calm Mladic but Bosnia is not my country. The United States itself says this is a separate country now, an independent country. Why do you come to me?" This was his basic response. The difficulty there was that we did not actually have a smoking gun to tie him to the events in Bosnia. Even later at the Hague Tribunal they had the problem of proving that he was linked to these events because they never found the smoking gun. When Milosevic did agree to take some action, he would portray it as almost a favor to us and a demonstration of how he also wanted to end the fighting in Bosnia. Again, during one of the Srebrenica demarches after the city fell, he said he would do his best to prevent any reprisals and that he would call Mladic. He picked up the phone and asked somebody to get Mladic for him. I remember he left the room for about ten minutes and then came back and said, "I talked to Mladic. He's crazy but I conveyed your warning to him." This was typical. For the most part, he didn't defend Mladic or the other Bosnian Serbs. He would tell me Mladic was crazy but that he tried to convince him to stay calm and not overreact. During Srebrenica, he said that Mladic promised him that he would not harm the people of Srebrenica. But whether he actually called Mladic or did not call Mladic, I have no idea. I suspect he did not. It was probably all political theater to appease us and make himself look like a good guy who shared our concerns. Unfortunately, we now know that Mladic did do terrible things to the people of Srebrenica.

Q: Did we ever answer, "Well, okay. If you have no control, these aren't your people, then you obviously have no objection to our going in and bombing the hell out of them?"

PERINA: I don't think we ever put it in those terms but it was certainly implied that we would use military force if needed. But we did not want to let Milosevic off the hook by accepting his argument that he wasn't responsible. Part of the difficulty with our policy, and why it was a difficult line to maintain, was that we were trying to maintain that Bosnia was a fully independent country in which Serbia had no right to intervene and yet at the same time asking

Milosevic to intervene by restraining Mladic and the Bosnian Serbs. There is a bit of a contradiction there, not a full contradiction but a bit. He exploited this a lot with this position of "Why do you come to me?"

Q: When you got back to the Embassy and sat with your colleagues, did you feel Milosevic was really running the show in Bosnia or did you think that he was perhaps complicit but not in control of the Bosnian Serbs?

PERINA: To be very honest, I did not know. I don't think Washington really knew but our best guess was that it was a mixture of the two. In certain ways Milosevic was certainly helping the Bosnian Serbs. Serbia provided military support, financial support, logistical support and so on. Some of this came through government channels but also a lot came from private groups and militias that sprang up, like Arkan's "Tigers." So how much influence this gave Milosevic over the Bosnian Serbs, or how long they could have continued to fight without Serbian support, is very difficult to gauge. Milosevic was complicit but can one say he was responsible for specific actions, like the slaughter of the Muslim men after the fall of Srebrenica? Did he know about that? Did he concur with that? I don't know. We don't know. Very frankly even later when he was on trial in The Hague and I was interviewed in The Hague by the prosecutors, it was clear that they also did not have a smoking gun on this. Certainly Milosevic bears much responsibility for the war as a whole because of his actions in starting the conflict but to what degree he exercised control over specific actions after the conflict started is a very difficult question.

Part of the reason that we didn't have a smoking gun was this incredibly strange way that he operated. I mentioned earlier how there was never a staff one could see in his offices in Belgrade. I visited dozens of times and never saw any infrastructure there. It was like sitting in a deserted building. This was even the case later during my tour when Bob Frasure, the Deputy Assistant Secretary responsible for Yugoslavia, started coming to Belgrade, and to a large degree also when Holbrooke started coming. Bob Frasure and I often discussed how bizarre this was. In one instance, Milosevic invited Frasure and me to a country house outside of Belgrade for discussions. We put together a draft list of some points and wanted to make a copy. We asked if there was a copying machine we could use. Milosevic answered "I don't have a copying machine here." This was in the country residence of the President. There was no staff and he claimed there wasn't a copier. He said, "I have a FAX" and in the end we made a copy of it by faxing it to ourselves. When Bob and I were leaving, we commented to each other on how incredible this was. This was the President of the country in one of his residences, and there was not a copying machine in the house. This again shows why it was difficult later to find a smoking gun. Milosevic greatly limited the number of people he kept around himself, and he really avoided paper. He did not like paper. He always claimed he did things by phone or that he talked to people, that he talked to Mladic or something like that. At least in our presence you never saw any paper that he had on his desk or anywhere.

And of course participation in meetings with him was very restricted. When Bob Frasure made visits, Milosevic would at most have three other people in the room: his assistant Goran Milinovic, whom I mentioned; his Foreign Minister Milan Milutinovic, and then for a while this strange person Chris Spiro. He was a Greek American. He was an activist in the Democratic Party from New Hampshire who had at one time served in the New Hampshire state legislature.

He was somehow engaged by Milosevic as an advisor. I always assumed it was part of Milosevic's effort to try to find ways to relate to the Americans better, and he thought that having an American citizen on his side would help him achieve this.

Q: What was purpose of these meetings?

PERINA: I have to give a little background here. It started when Holbrooke became the Assistant Secretary for Europe and recognized that our policy of isolating Milosevic and just delivering threatening demarches to him was not working. A decision was made to send out Bob Frasure to engage with Milosevic as an envoy from Washington and to try to elicit his help in ending the conflict. Initially, there was not a specific agenda to these meetings. They were exploratory and designed to show Milosevic that the U.S. might engage with him in a more positive way if he really proved helpful on Bosnia. We did, with Bob, eventually work out a set of broad principles on how to end the conflict, which in fact became the basis of the Dayton Agreement. These principles were very broad initially and primarily designed to draw Milosevic into a process and get him engaged.

Q: This was still a period when the Europeans were trying to play a role in resolving the conflict. What were they doing?

PERINA: Well, the Europeans were still talking about finding a solution but in fact they were doing very little. The whole European Union effort largely collapsed. One of the reasons, however, was that Milosevic did not really want to deal with the Europeans. He on occasion saw the British Chargé d'Affaires Ivar Roberts, but otherwise he made no effort to engage with the Europeans. He told us that he wanted to resolve the conflict with the Americans because only we were objective toward all the parties and did not have favorites, in the way that, for example, the Germans favored the Croats. He said that only we were fair and could be trusted. There was, of course, a lot of flattery in this. I think Milosevic also assumed that if he made a deal with the Americans, the Europeans would all follow, and he was correct in this. An interesting side point is how he denigrated the Russians in discussions with us. He did have meetings with the Russian Ambassador, and the Russians were the most vocal international supporters of Serbia. That is why they had an ambassador and not a chargé d'affaires—they had no qualms in giving Serbia diplomatic recognition. But when I asked Milosevic about his dealings with the Russians, he would say, "The Russians are useless. They've got their own problems. They're not doing anything. They can't help in this."

The Russian position was also interesting. I met a few times with the Russian Ambassador, who was not a particularly friendly fellow and did not have much contact with the rest of the diplomatic corps. Clearly, the Russians had some agenda in the region but they were very weak and had just lost their empire. They could not be expected to play a powerful role. But what was interesting was how they often misread the situation in the Balkans. Putting their money on almost full support of Milosevic was not a way to gain influence in the region. And later, the Russians completely misread and underestimated the problem of Kosovo, though many other Europeans did that as well.

Q: Was there much contact between your Embassy in Belgrade and the U.S. Embassy in Zagreb?

PERINA: Not very much, frankly. We read each other's cables but did not coordinate in any special fashion. I did communicate on occasion with Peter Galbraith when he became the Ambassador to Croatia. We met at one of the Department's chief of mission meetings, and I in fact invited him to visit Belgrade, which he did and he met Milosevic. Then we were together quite a bit in Dayton. I think he did a very good job in Zagreb and respect him for holding the Croats to account for the expulsion of the Serbs from Krajina. It took courage to do that, and Peter did do it.

Q: Did you ever run across Mrs. Milosevic who was a power in her own way?

PERINA: She certainly was, and she was much talked about for her alleged influence over Milosevic. She was also joked about as a bit of a kook and dragon lady combined. I never in my two and one half years there met her. I don't think I even saw her. But I did get the sense that Milosevic was really close to her, and that she really did have a lot of influence over him. He had pictures of her in his office. They stood out in what was otherwise almost a barren room.
One of the more interesting people I did meet in Belgrade was Milovan Djilas, who was still alive when I arrived though he died about a year later.

Q: Was he looked up to because he was a great figure at one time, a world figure?

PERINA: He had been a world figure, and I had studied about him in graduate school so I wanted to meet him. He was living in a modest Belgrade apartment, just like any other Serb. He had no influence and was not at all in the public spotlight. Many Serbs just considered him an old Communist. It was hard to imagine when you met him that this was the person who had had numerous meetings with Stalin and lived through so much. He was still intellectually very alert but not engaged in a serious way in contemporary politics. When I asked him what he thought U.S. policy toward Serbia should be, he responded that we should just bomb Milosevic, whom he described as a terrible man. He criticized the sanctions for punishing the wrong people.

Q: What about Jovanka Tito? Was she a figure at all?

PERINA: I never met her, and she was not talked about very much.

Q: Were there any other political figures who amounted to much or was Milosevic the name of the game?

PERINA: Milosevic was the name of the game. All of the other people whom I met there-- his ministers, generals, and so on-- were total cronies as far as I could see. I dealt almost exclusively with Milosevic. I had the access and could see him or call him whenever needed. On occasion I dealt with the Foreign Minister, Milan Milutinovic, but really just on secondary issues.

I should mention, however, that when I first arrived in Belgrade I was also responsible for Macedonia. Even though it had already declared independence from Serbia, we had not yet opened an Embassy there, and it was still being covered by the Embassy in Belgrade. So I made a trip down to Skopje and met with the President, Kiro Gligorov. He struck me as an impressive

person who was doing his best to act responsibly and with restraint to continued border provocations by Serbia. We suspected that Milosevic was trying to foment a conflict that would allow him to intervene in Macedonia and bring it back under Serbia's fold. Gligorov was in a very tough position because Macedonia was so weak in comparison to Serbia but he kept steady nerves and never overreacted. I have often said that in my view Rugova in Kosovo and Gligorov in Macedonia were the two most responsible and impressive leaders in all of former Yugoslavia at that time.

Q: What about some of the Serb society in which you as a diplomat were moving? What were you getting from them?

PERINA: You know, it was hard to come into contact with what you would call the average Serb. I dealt primarily with two opposing communities—on the one hand the government consisting largely of just Milosevic, and on the other hand the dissident and opposition community. This consisted of opposition party leaders, NGO leaders, reformist intellectuals, representatives of the very limited independent media that existed, and so on. These were the people I had most often as guests in the residence. Some of the human rights activists in particular, like Sonia Biserko or Natasha Kandic, were very courageous people but they had little influence on the larger political scene. Their influence came much later, after Milosevic's downfall.

Q: What about Vuk Draskovic? He was quite a name at the time.

PERINA: He was probably the best-known dissident in the West. Milosevic contributed to that by having thugs beat him up very seriously shortly before my arrival. I knew Vuk well but considered him a little out of his element as a political leader. He did not really understand politics and came up with very strange ideas and suggestions. He was a writer and a poet, and not a serious political thinker. The most impressive opposition political leader I knew was Zoran Djindjic. He had been an exchange student in Germany and seemed to me to be the most astute of the opposition figures. We had him at our house many times. He in fact became Prime Minister in the post-Milosevic era and was very instrumental in shipping Milosevic off to the Hague. Then he was assassinated by Serb nationalists, which was a big loss for Serbia.

Shortly after I arrived, I also met Vojislav Kostunica, another opposition leader at that time who subsequently became both Prime Minister and President of post-Milosevic Serbia. At the time I knew him, he was completely without influence or power. We met once, and it was not a good meeting. He was a strong Serb nationalist who did not hide that he disliked American policy toward Serbia. He was a very frustrated and angry person. He did not have any constituency or much influence during my entire time in Belgrade.

I also went a couple of times to see Patriarch Pavle, who was the head of the Serbian Orthodox church. He was a very frail, elderly man but very influential in the country. We wanted him to condemn some of the things happening in Bosnia, the sniper shootings of civilians and so on. He listened to my arguments but would not say anything remotely critical of the Bosnian Serb forces.

Q: What about Montenegro?

PERINA: Montenegro was interesting because amidst all the other developments at the time, it was always toying with the idea of breaking away from Serbia and becoming independent. There was this tension between Belgrade and Podgorica, the Montenegrin capital, always in the background. The fact is that Montenegrins were split on the issue of independence almost 50-50. Contrary to what some believe, U.S. policy was not repeat not to support Montenegrin independence. We felt this could lead to yet another war in the region. I visited Montenegro several times to talk to local politicians and get a sense of the mood. Fortunately, no serious problem with Montenegro erupted in my time. The situation became much more serious in later years.

Q: So what was happening with Kosovo in your time?

PERINA: Kosovo was a whole other story. The entire diplomatic corps in Belgrade talked a lot about Kosovo but the U.S. took it most seriously. We were always worried about Kosovo. The conventional wisdom was that it would blow up someday, but no one knew when. The fact that it had not blown up, however, invariably led to it being relegated to the back burner. People were just too focused on Bosnia, where an actual war was going on, to focus on someplace where a potential war might take place. But we still did take it more seriously than other countries, in part also because of the interest in the U.S. Congress. The Albanian lobby in the U.S. was very effective. Probably only the Israeli and Armenian lobbies were better.

I do not mean to imply that the Kosovo problem was somehow an artificial one, however. It was a very real problem, and very bad things were happening in Kosovo. The Serb approach was basically a colonial one. The Kosovar Albanians were treated brutally. They saw the U.S. as their major protector and often showed me photographs of the abuse: terrible pictures of people beaten, women raped, and so on. They were very good in documenting all of this and taking their case to the international community. On the other hand, in fairness one must say that many Serbs in Kosovo were also beaten up by Albanians when opportunities presented themselves for this. The gulf and the hatred between Serbs and Albanians were enormous.

I haven't started talking about the Holbrooke visits yet but one of the things that I tried to do with Holbrooke was to get him more interested in Kosovo. I met a number of times with Ibrahim Rugova, the Kosovar Albanian leader who was elected President in elections that the Serbs did not recognize. He was a very moderate, reasonable and impressive person who did much to try to avoid an explosion in Kosovo because he knew, rightly, that the Albanians would pay an enormous price for it. He promoted peaceful resistance to Serbia and did so very effectively. Rugova almost never came to Belgrade but he told me that he would be willing to come if he had an opportunity to meet Holbrooke. I tried to interest Holbrooke in this but he turned it down. His position, both in Serbia and later during the Dayton talks, was that one had to resolve Bosnia first, that if the two issues became intertwined they would create a Gordian knot much more difficult to untangle. So he wanted to stay completely away from the Kosovo issues until Bosnia was resolved. He felt if he ever met with Rugova, even once, he would not be able to get away from it.

Q: I think he had a point there. They were two quite different issues.

PERINA: I think he was right but it was hard explaining this to the Albanians, which became my job both in Belgrade and during the Dayton talks. While we were in Dayton, there was a demonstration outside the base of several hundred Albanian-Americans who came from all over the country to ask that Kosovo be put on the Dayton agenda. It was the only demonstration during the Dayton talks, and I was assigned to go out and meet with the leaders. They were a very peaceful and reasonable group, headed by an Albanian-American physician from Texas. I told them very honestly that Kosovo was not on the table in Dayton because this was a meeting about the war in Bosnia but I assured them that the U.S. had not forgotten Kosovo and would deal with the issue at the right time. They were disappointed, of course, but seemed to accept the argument.

It was true that we had not forgotten the issue but there was just too much on the Yugoslav agenda at the time. Back in Belgrade, however, I raised Kosovo regularly in my meetings with Milosevic. I tried to convince him that Belgrade's policy would lead to another explosion and violent conflict in the region if it remained unchanged. His standard response was that we were taken in by Kosovar Albanian propaganda, that most Albanians in Kosovo were quite happy, and that only a few troublemakers were fomenting discontent. I am not certain if he really believed this and was so totally misinformed about the situation in Kosovo, or if he just believed that he could keep a lid on the problem indefinitely. I suspect it was a combination of both.

Q: But it was also a nationalistic issue throughout Serb society.

PERINA: Absolutely. Even the pro-Western, pro-democracy Serbs we knew had very little sympathy for the Kosovar Albanians. There were a few exceptions to this but they were very rare. The gulf even between moderate and reasonable Serbs and Albanians was enormous. To me it was clear that the situation was untenable and would lead to a crisis at some point. What we tried to do in the interim was to urge both sides toward moderation and non-violence. In the case of the Albanians, we had Embassy officers specifically assigned to visit Kosovo on a weekly basis to maintain contact with the Albanians and show them that their plight had not been forgotten by the United States. These officers stayed in local hotels and spent a lot of time going back and forth. After the Holbrooke visits to Belgrade started and Milosevic was trying to demonstrate what a reasonable person he was, I had the idea of asking him whether the Embassy could open a permanent office in Pristina, the Kosovo capital, as a permanent base for our visits. This was actually a big request since everyone knew the sensitivity of Kosovo, and we still lacked formal diplomatic relations for even an Embassy, much less an Embassy branch office. But I persuaded Holbrooke to ask the question, which was one of the few times he agreed to engage on Kosovo. Milosevic was caught off guard and responded in a cavalier way " Sure. If you want to do this, why not." I think he regretted this answer the minute he gave it, and the Foreign Ministry certainly regretted it when it came to working out the details. But we did open an office in Pristina, and I think it was one of the more significant accomplishments of my tour. The Kosovar Albanians were so delighted that they actually found a building for us to use free of charge. They saw it as a big step forward in getting international recognition for the entire Kosovo problem. It was also seen as a victory for Rugova and his non-violent policies. It helped defuse the tension, at least for a while.

Q: We have people who were brought out of retirement to go to Kosovo. I recently interviewed one of them.

PERINA: During my time, we sent people from the Embassy but alternated them. One of our political officers, Liz Bonkowski, spent a lot of time in Kosovo. The Kosovar Albanians were very anxious to have Western diplomats, particularly American diplomats, in Kosovo because they believed it inhibited the Serbs and offered the Albanians some protection. So having a permanent Embassy office down there was a big step forward. The fact is the situation in Kosovo was extremely tense. I always believed that Kosovo would prove more difficult to resolve than Bosnia. In Bosnia, the Serbs, Muslims and Croats basically spoke the same language, intermarried, and could often not be distinguished except by their last names. And still they slaughtered one another. In Kosovo, the gulf was much wider. The Kosovar Albanians had created their own parallel society that excluded everything Serb. They boycotted Serb schools and set up their own school system so that a whole generation of Albanians already existed that could not speak or even understand Serbian. It was clear that the situation was untenable and a disaster was coming.

Q: How were the Europeans dealing with this situation?

PERINA: Well, everyone would wring their hands when Kosovo was mentioned, but the Europeans by and large did not know what to do. One got the impression they were secretly hoping that in fact the Serbs would keep the Albanians in line so that there would not be an explosion. Some Europeans were reminded of ethnic minority problems in their own countries and had a lot of sympathy with the Serbs. The most active European diplomat was the British Chargé, Ivar Roberts. As far as I know, he was the only other diplomat in Belgrade other than myself and the Russian Ambassador who on occasion had meetings with Milosevic. But even he underestimated the Kosovo problem. We were the most engaged Embassy on Kosovo, though even with us it was a secondary issue in comparison to Bosnia.

The real difference in approach to Kosovo between us and the Europeans was shown after the Dayton Agreement. Here I have to jump ahead a little. Basically, Milosevic made the Dayton Agreement possible. He was the key person who forced the Serb delegation to accept the agreement. Even Holbrooke recognized this. Milosevic did this because he was not a Serb nationalist but rather a self-serving opportunist. He believed that if he helped Dayton succeed, he would be seen in the world as a peacemaker and given legitimacy and respect, the sanctions on Serbia would be lifted, and his role in starting the whole Yugoslav conflict would be forgotten and forgiven. This is what he most wanted and why he helped Dayton succeed. The problem was, however, that we were committed to our promise to the Albanians that we would not forget Kosovo. So after Dayton we did not lift all of the sanctions but rather stated that an outer wall of sanctions would remain until the Kosovo issue was resolved. In effect, the economic sanctions were lifted but the political sanctions, such as non-recognition of Serbia-Montenegro, remained. Milosevic was furious when he learned that some sanctions would remain. He felt that he had been tricked, and it was the beginning of his falling out with Holbrooke.

But also—and this is where the Europeans come in—most of them did not support the U.S. on

the outer wall of sanctions policy. They did not believe that Kosovo should be a reason for further sanctions on Serbia. Most of them started recognizing Serbia-Montenegro and elevating their Chargés to Ambassadors. By the time I left Belgrade, I was one of the few remaining Chargé d'Affaires. This European rush to normalize relations with Serbia and overlook the Kosovo issue was of course the biggest dread of the Kosovar Albanians. I think it was partly because of this development that the Albanians gave up hope that the international community would help them and moved toward developing the Kosovo Liberation Army, which suddenly appeared on the scene about two years later. This was when I was serving as the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Department, and it took the entire international community by surprise. Suddenly, the Kosovar Albanians had an army which they had largely secretly put together. It was an amazing feat but also reflected how bad our intelligence was on Kosovo because we were still focusing almost exclusively on Bosnia. But I think I am getting too far ahead. I am sure we will come back to Kosovo later.

Q: OK, so let's go back to Bosnia pre-Dayton. What was the process of getting to Dayton? How did the talks evolve?

PERINA: Well, we have to go back to the visits by Bob Frasure, the Deputy Assistant Secretary who was handling Yugoslavia and whom I already mentioned. Bob started coming out when it became clear that the policy of just delivering threatening demarches to Milosevic was not working, and when Holbrooke became Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and wanted to get more involved in resolving the conflict. Frasure came out as sort of an advance party to meet with Milosevic and explore if there was any common ground for negotiations that Holbrooke would then take over. He made several visits, and in the end we drew up a broad list of principles by which we thought the conflict could be resolved. The bottom line of these principles was that Bosnia had to remain as a single federalist state, albeit Republika Srpska, a Serb entity with considerable autonomy, could continue to exist within Bosnia. Milosevic agreed to this, and it was the cue for Holbrooke to come in. Milosevic knew this. We had told him that if talks at the Frasure level succeeded, then a higher level representative—understood to be Holbrooke—would come to Belgrade. It was an incentive for Milosevic because he wanted to get the U.S. involved, and he wanted to deal with the highest-level American possible.

He was also at this time trying to clean up his image in other ways. For example, we had a long-standing child custody dispute with Belgrade. An American mother was trying to get her children back from a Serbian father who had absconded with them to Serbia after he lost custody in U.S. divorce proceedings. For about five years the mother with the Embassy's help had been trying to get the children back, with the Serbs always claiming that they did not know their whereabouts. One day shortly before Dayton, out of the blue, Milosevic called me to say that the children had been found and could be returned to the mother. We immediately picked them up and kept them in the Embassy until the mother arrived, about 24 hours later, for a very dramatic and emotional reunion, since they hardly had memory of her. I have no doubt that the Serbs had known for a long time where the children were but Milosevic finally made the decision to return them when he felt it would most bolster his image with the Americans.

I remember Holbrooke's first visit to Belgrade. He stayed at the Ambassador's residence, where I was by that time living. He came with Bob Frasure and it was the first of about 20 visits by

Holbrooke during my time, though I did not keep exact count. At least it seemed like 20, if not more. It was a get-acquainted session but basically he hit it off with Milosevic. Then with each subsequent visit he got more and more involved. He started coming out with the interagency team he put together that included NSC, DOD and JCS reps. The JCS rep was a fellow named Wes Clark, who at the time I think was a one star general. It was this group of about a half dozen people, including Holbrooke, Bob Frasure, Chris Hill, Wes Clark as the JCS rep and an OSD rep, that formed the key negotiating team.

This group changed shortly thereafter, however, because of the tragic road accident outside Sarajevo in which Bob Frasure, the NSC rep Nelson Drew, and the DOD rep Joseph Kruzel were killed. This happened on August 19, 1995. The whole delegation was traveling from Belgrade to Sarajevo and had been at my house for dinner the night before. Bob Frasure made his last phone call to his wife from our residence. It was an enormous tragedy. My whole family had gotten to know Bob well from his many previous visits when he stayed with us. We were all devastated, including our daughters. I subsequently flew back to Washington for the memorial service and funeral. I remember telephoning Milosevic that Saturday afternoon to tell him about the accident. I left word with his assistant, and Milosevic called back in about two minutes. He did sound genuinely shocked by the news. He had gotten to know Bob well and I think liked him. He later invited Bob's wife and daughters to visit Belgrade and see where Bob had spent his last days. Bob was replaced on the delegation by Chris Hill, who then came on all of Holbrooke's subsequent visits.

Q: What was Holbrooke's initial impression of Milosevic and how did the talks proceed?

PERINA: Holbrooke had been briefed on Milosevic by Bob Frasure and me and knew a little of what to expect. I think both Milosevic and Holbrooke found each other interesting as personalities and had an incentive to engage one another. Milosevic saw a deal with the U.S. as the path to lifting sanctions and gaining respectability in the international community, and Holbrooke rightly saw Milosevic as the key person to resolving the Bosnian conflict. Holbrooke was the right person for dealing with Milosevic. For one thing, he could simply outlast Milosevic. These negotiating sessions sometimes went late into the night, sometimes until three o'clock in the morning and start again at six o'clock. I think one session went all night. Holbrooke really had the energy to do this. I think Holbrooke also found Milosevic an interesting person. You could engage with him more easily than with (Bosnian President) Izetbegovic or (Croatian President) Tudjman. For one thing, he spoke English so well. You did not need the formality of interpreters. It makes a big difference in discussions. Of course, that does not mean Holbrooke liked Milosevic. I think we all recognized that this was an unsavory man with a lot of blood on his hands. Perhaps because of this, there was a real challenge in dealing with him.

Q: Were you getting much out of Sarajevo and what was happening there?

PERINA: We saw the cables, and we followed all of the press reports. I knew the Ambassador, John Menzies. But until we were together at Dayton, we did not have much direct interaction. The link between all three capitals—Belgrade, Sarajevo and Zagreb—was Holbrooke and his traveling entourage. And one of the interesting things about Holbrooke, which I am sure frustrated a lot of people in Washington, was that he never reported on his meetings through

cables. In the 20 or so visits by him to Belgrade, we never did a single reporting cable.

Q: This was deliberate?

PERINA: Absolutely. He always said-- and he was right in this-- that the more you report, the more Washington starts interfering in the negotiations. Interagency groups are set up, instructions drafted and circulated, a lot of people who want to get in on the action start appearing, and generally they are not helpful. What Holbrooke did was to call Warren Christopher periodically and brief him orally on the talks. Than, if anyone wanted a telegram, he would just say that he had already briefed the Secretary and that was that. And he got away with this as far as the State Department was concerned. It was a little tougher with the other agencies, particularly the Defense Department, because they did not trust the State Department, either Holbrooke or Christopher. That is why there were so many DOD representatives on the delegation whom Holbrooke had been obliged to accept as part of the initial decision to launch talks. These people were all doing their own reports back to their agencies in Washington. In particular Wes Clark, as the representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, would run off after every meeting to send a report back to his people in the Pentagon. Holbrooke knew this, and it irritated him, but there was nothing he could do about it except—later in the process- start having some very private, one-on-one meetings with Milosevic to which the agency reps were not invited.

Q: As the talks started, was it almost implicit that we had the option of bombing the Bosnian Serbs if the talks did not succeed? Did Milosevic understand this?

PERINA: Yes. That option was always there, and Milosevic did understand it because in fact before Dayton it happened. We did bomb the Serbs in Bosnia briefly, and there was a huge demonstration, several thousand people, in front of the Embassy. It was one of the few times I was really frightened about things getting out of hand but there was an element of orchestration in the demonstration so that Milosevic did not let it get out of hand. It looked very threatening but remained peaceful. All of this was very ironical because the Embassy had twice been evacuated before the Holbrooke talks when we were threatening the Bosnian Serbs with military action. In each of these cases, all dependents and non-essential personnel were evacuated to Budapest in advance of possible bombing. In each case, the bombing did not happen, and people returned to Belgrade after several days in the Kempinski Hotel in Budapest. After the second time, it became silly, and the Serbs started making fun of it. They photographed the automobile convoy on the way to Budapest and made jokes about it. So then when we finally did take military action shortly before Dayton, the whole Embassy was there and no one had been evacuated. I cannot now remember what finally triggered the bombing but the point was primarily to show the Serbs prior to Dayton that we were serious. Holbrooke wanted to show that there were teeth in the threats after all. But it all happened on short notice and no one had time to evacuate the Embassy when we finally might have needed to do so.

Q: During this time was Croatia brought into the game?

PERINA: Sure. There was another team working with Croatia to try to set up a Muslim-Croatian federation in Bosnia to balance off the Serbs in the negotiations. I was not directly involved in this but it was seen as one of the elements needed to make the Dayton structure work.

Q: Was this structure worked out with Milosevic?

PERINA: The basic elements agreed with Milosevic were that Bosnia would remain as a single, unified state consisting of two entities, the Serb Republic or Republika Srpska as the Serbs called it, and the Muslim-Croat Federation. The two entities would have a lot of autonomy, including their own parliaments, but there would be a central Bosnian parliament and governmental structure, a central judiciary and so on. There was a rough outline of the division of powers among these entities and the key institutions that would be created but otherwise all the details were worked out at Dayton. That is where we had the real experts, the lawyers and others to put flesh on the bones.

Q: How did Holbrooke get the Bosnian Serbs to agree to this?

PERINA: Well, Holbrooke rightly did not deal with the Bosnian Serb leaders Karadzic and Mladic. They were simply too tainted by the atrocities committed. That is why he dealt with Milosevic, and why Milosevic was key to the negotiations. One of the fundamental problems through the talks was that we needed to negotiate with the Bosnian Serbs but could not do so directly but only through Milosevic. Milosevic thus knew how important he was to the whole process and hoped to redeem himself and his entire career by helping to make Dayton succeed. There was the one episode that Holbrooke describes in his book when Milosevic persuaded us to have a meeting with Karadzic and Mladic. He organized it at a house on the outskirts of Belgrade. It was the only time that I also met with Karadzic and Mladic because, of course, they were not invited to the Dayton talks. They impressed me as rather sullen and unfriendly. They were, of course, very unhappy with the position they had gotten themselves into. Through their actions in Bosnia, they had become politically radioactive, and thus Milosevic held all the cards in the negotiations, and they as well as Holbrooke were dependent on him as an intermediary.

Q: How did the Dayton meeting come about?

PERINA: Well, once the Serbs, basically Milosevic, agreed to the basic principles and structures of a settlement, it was understood that there would have to be a meeting of everyone involved to flesh out the agreement and sign it. You must remember that all of this took place before Milosevic, Izetbegovic and Tudjman had even gotten together in one room. There were actually many key issues still left hanging before we ever got to Dayton. Dayton was not just a paper exercise of filling in the blanks. We knew that there would be high-level talks as well as much detail to work out. Many people had to be brought together. For a while, there was talk of doing this in Europe, but Holbrooke wanted to retain control of it in the United States. Interestingly, Milosevic also wanted the meeting to be in the U.S. I am not sure how in the end the decision was made for Dayton but it made sense to do it on a military base where facilities would be available and access could be controlled. I heard subsequently that Dayton was chosen because it was Strobe Talbott's home town and he suggested it.

Q: What was your role in Dayton?

PERINA: I was Milosevic's keeper at Dayton. Each of the three chiefs of mission came out with

their head of state—Peter Galbraith accompanied Tudjman from Zagreb, John Menzies from Sarajevo accompanied Izetbegovic, and I came with Milosevic. The job was to get them to Dayton and be a contact point in dealings with them. I received permission from the Department to fly to Dayton with Milosevic in the private plane that carried the entire Serb delegation. There were some Serbs who came separately from Bosnia, from Sarajevo, but not Mladic or Karadzic who wanted to come but were told they could not. So the Serb delegation from Belgrade was basically Milosevic and Milutinovic and then some military people and intelligence types. For some reason, Milosevic also took this American advisor Chris Spiro to Dayton. During the talks, I participated in most of the meetings involving Milosevic, though not all because there were a few meetings just exclusively between him and Holbrooke. As the talks got more detailed, they broke down into working groups of experts in which Milosevic did not participate. I spent a lot of time trying to keep an eye on Milosevic and the Serb delegation, and there was a lot of down time as is usual in these types of negotiations when people just mingled and chatted in the restaurant or coffee bar.

Milosevic and the other Serbs of course got a little antsy by being restricted to the air force base, Wright-Patterson. They were always coming to us and asking for permission to leave the base and go into town. We let them do so only once when I accompanied them to a shopping mall in Dayton. It was only about a dozen Serbs, but we had to have a lot of security from the U.S. so the entourage was very noticeable. The Serbs walked around looking at the stores and buying things. Some of the lower-level people bought quite a bit of stuff and were excited by all the stores. I remember that Victoria's Secret caused a stir and a lot of jokes. Milosevic, as I recall, bought a pair of shoes in a department store. I am sure he did not need a pair of shoes but he probably wanted to make the point that he had been off the base and allowed to buy what he wanted. These were, after all, people who for years had been under sanctions. There was thus something symbolic for them in getting off the base and buying things—it documented what they saw as the end of sanctions and of being international pariahs. And of course, there were Serb journalists and TV crews there to report on this. This was the only time we let Milosevic off the base. The Serbs wanted to make excursions a number of other times, but we told them that they could not because of security concerns.

Q: And this was not an idle comment.

PERINA: True. And we also did not want them wandering all around Dayton. That was the whole point of conducting the talks on a military base. But we did forget about one thing—the PX. We learned that the Serbs had started visiting the PX and buying things there, including U.S. military gear and uniforms in fairly large quantities. We had not thought of this, and the image came of Serb troops outfitted in U.S. gear that the Serbs had procured in Dayton. Holbrooke got really upset, and we had to tell the Serbs that they could not do any more shopping at the PX.

Q. Were the Europeans present at Dayton?

PERINA: The key ally and contact group countries were there but with a very symbolic presence. Most countries had just one person to report on events. These people were largely observers—they were not involved in the negotiations, and generally they were out of the loop. Of course, most people continued to be out of the loop because that was still Holbrooke's

negotiating style. On the big issues, he would report to Warren Christopher and through him to the President but try to keep as much of a close hold on information as possible. The Europeans were allowed to be there symbolically because we all knew that in the end we would need the Europeans. NATO would have a post-Dayton role, a vast amount of reconstruction assistance would be required, and so on. But by and large, Dayton was a U.S. show, and really Holbrooke's show. I think Holbrooke deserves a lot of credit for what was accomplished in Dayton. Certainly the agreement did not bring love and everlasting peace to the Balkans, but it did stop the fighting and the bloodshed, and that in and of itself is a very significant accomplishment.

Now I also think—and I believe Holbrooke would agree with this—that Milosevic did a lot to make Dayton possible. This does not absolve him of his complicity in starting the whole conflict but it is a reality that should be understood. Milosevic operated much like Holbrooke in keeping a lot of information to himself and not sharing it. He cut the final deal in Dayton with Holbrooke, making an agreement possible. Many members of the Serb delegation did not know what was in the agreement until shortly before it was signed. In fact, there was a rumor that I cannot confirm that at least one member of the Serb delegation, a person from Sarajevo, passed out when he saw the final text. There was a lot of unhappiness with parts of the agreement that Milosevic had agreed to but none of the other Serbs could do anything about it.

Q: What essentially were the parts that made the Serbs unhappy?

PERINA: Well, there was a lot that made them unhappy, including the basic fact that Republika Srpska would not become independent but remain a part of Bosnia. But this was not a surprise to anyone, and all the Serbs knew this was coming. What really upset them were some of the more detailed provisions on return of refugees, property rights and restitution of property. Basically, the agreement said that all of the Muslims who had been ethnically cleansed could go back to their homes and reclaim their property. This would reverse all of the results of the ethnic cleansing that the Serbs had perpetrated. But then in addition, many of the Serbs were shocked to see how the boundaries were drawn between the Serb and the Federation portions of Bosnia, and also of Sarajevo which was divided into sectors. In effect, some Serbs found that they would be living in Muslim-controlled areas. The person who reportedly passed out was a rather affluent Bosnian Serb who suddenly learned that his entire estate would be in a Muslim rather than Serb part of Sarajevo. As I mentioned before, Milosevic could agree to such terms because he was not really a Serb nationalist. He did not care that much about Serbs. He cared about Milosevic. He thought that by helping to conclude an agreement at Dayton his past actions would be forgotten and he would gain legitimacy and respect. But he was wrong. Kosovo was still outstanding, and it would prove to be his downfall.

Q: Was he still afraid at Dayton that Serbs might be bombed by the U.S.? Was that also a motivation?

PERINA: Perhaps it was. Certainly bombing was never off the table. But this reminds me of another anecdote about the technical support we had at Dayton from the military, which was really impressive. The process of deciding the borders between Republika Srpska and the Federation was one of the hardest parts of the negotiation. It amounted to sitting down and dividing a country on maps, deciding which side gets this village and that road. Numerous

disputes came up. In one example, the disposition of a country road depended on whether it was passable in the winter or not, and there was an argument on how wide it actually was. Well, the U.S. had developed a wonderful way to deal with these disputes. We had virtually all of Bosnia on aerial film. There was a room set up at Dayton with several very large TV screens. In the case of this road, for example, we could go to this room, ask the technicians to find the road, and literally fly over it, even changing altitude within a certain range. The delegations that saw this technology were really amazed. One day, Holbrooke found a pretext to take Milosevic into this room and show him how it worked. Milosevic was also amazed. But, of course, the film had not been put together for the purpose of helping the Dayton negotiations. It had been put together by our military for the purpose of possible air strikes within Bosnia. Holbrooke knew this, and he intentionally wanted to remind Milosevic of it. I am confident Milosevic understood and got the message. It was in fact very impressive technology for its time. Nowadays, of course, it might not be any more impressive than Google Earth.

Q: Did you find yourself getting sympathetic to the Serbs after all the time you spent with them? You understood their concerns and viewpoints, after all.

PERINA: I found Milosevic very interesting but I would not say I grew more sympathetic to him. On the contrary, as we discussed earlier, the more I knew him the more I recognized how strange he was and what a perverse view of the world he had. With him, the first impression was better than subsequent ones. But I would say that over my entire tour in Belgrade I grew more sympathetic to the Serb people. They had acquired an extremely negative image in the West as almost a nation of rapists and war criminals. This was unfair. I came to know many, many good and courageous Serbs who were as opposed to Milosevic, Mladic and Karadzic as anyone in the West. They were paying the price for having a very bad leadership which allowed the worst elements of society to come to the foreground. I don't think that Serbs are inherently any better or worse than other nationalities in the Balkans. But they have to this day acquired a very negative image in the minds of most people in the West.

Q: Well, Germany is still working its way out from under Hitler's time.

PERINA: True. But I just don't believe in the concept of collective guilt. I think making everyone guilty lets everyone off the hook. I believe in individual accountability. But the reality is that nations do pay the price for the actions of leaders. I understand how it happens, though it is not fair.

Q: What was your impression of (Croatian President) Tudjman and (Bosnian President) Izetbegovic?

PERINA: It is difficult for me to say because I really did not interact with them directly. I met them once or twice and observed them at meetings but do not have any deep impression. Certainly their demeanor was very different from Milosevic's. They were much more formal. Dealing with them was very different, if only because of the language barrier.

Q: What was your impression of the Milosevic- Holbrooke dialogue at Dayton? Were there shouting matches between them and the like?

PERINA: I never witnessed a shouting match. That was not Holbrooke's style, nor Milosevic's style. Milosevic wanted always to show how unflappable he was. And Holbrooke's real strength was his persistence. He would never give up, even when somebody else might say this is impossible and walk away. It was often just a matter of physical duration and energy. Holbrooke could go on very little sleep at night. I saw this already in his visits to Belgrade. He could go on two hours of sleep at night. Then in the car on the way to the airport he would say "I have to rest for 10 minutes." He would close his eyes in the car and wake up ten minutes later and be all energetic again. Both Milosevic and Holbrooke were like that. But toward the end of the Dayton talks, Holbrooke did put on this big bluff that he would declare the conference a failure unless all three presidents signed on. We in the U.S. delegation were actually instructed to pack our bags and put them on the sidewalk in preparation for pick-up. He wanted it to really look like he was ending the conference and would declare it a failure.

Q: What would have been the consequences? Was there an implied consequence like bombing the Bosnian Serbs again if the conference failed?

PERINA: I never heard Holbrooke say directly we're going to bomb if this doesn't work. But as far as the Serbs were concerned, certainly there was an implication that the sanctions would get worse, the isolation would get worse, and we would under no circumstances allow Republika Srpska to secede from Bosnia. In other words, no matter what the Bosnian Serbs did, they would not achieve their main objective of breaking off from Bosnia. We would make sure of that, not through direct military intervention but rather by supporting the Muslim-Croat Federation and changing the military balance within Bosnia if the fighting continued. So logically, the best deal for the Serbs was what they could get in Dayton.

Q: What was the feeling when the Dayton Accords were signed?

PERINA: They were actually signed twice. There was a signing ceremony at the end of the Dayton Conference in November, and then there was a formal signing ceremony in Paris in December which the French very much wanted. Holbrooke agreed to this because we needed the Europeans to help implement the agreement and also because the Paris ceremony was pretty much *deja vu*. The really significant event was when the three presidents signed the agreement in Dayton. Many of the Serbs in the delegation, as I mentioned, were devastated. They saw the Agreement as a total sell-out. But for Milosevic, it was a real moment of triumph. Here he had moved from being a sanctioned pariah to being a peacemaker on television screens around the world. Congratulations to the three presidents came from everywhere, including from President Clinton at the White House. I really think Milosevic believed at that moment that he had managed to change his image and shed his pariah status. But we had not forgotten about Kosovo, and Kosovo was yet to be his undoing.

Q: So what happened to you after Dayton?

PERINA: I returned to Belgrade and shortly before Christmas I got a call from (Deputy Secretary of State) Strobe Talbott asking me to come back to Washington and be Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European Bureau. What happened was that Holbrooke resigned shortly

after Dayton to go back to the private sector and he was replaced by John Kornblum, whom I had known for many years and worked for when I was doing CSCE issues. John had been the senior deputy to Holbrooke and now wanted me to be his senior deputy.

Q: In the two months when you were back in Belgrade, how did the Dayton accords go over?

PERINA: Much better with most of the Serbs in Serbia than one would think. They were for the most part relieved that the war was over and that the sanctions might be lifted. I think the Bosnian Serbs were much less happy. The average Serb in Serbia was less supportive of the Bosnian Serbs than many people understand. Sure, there was a sense that Serbs have to support their own against Muslims and Croats. But there was also a real exasperation with the war and a sense that Serbia was paying the price for the likes of Karadzic and Mladic. Most Serbs wanted the war to end and considered Dayton an acceptable and fair conclusion.

Q: Were you seeing a significant exodus of bright young Serbs out of Serbia?

PERINA: Certainly during the period of the sanctions there was an enormous desire among young people to leave the country. There were no opportunities in Serbia. There was not even a functioning economy. But not that many Serbs managed to leave because it was very difficult. Countries clamped down on granting visas, and Serbia was very isolated. There were not even international flights from Belgrade. Getting out was a real challenge, even for non-Serbs.

Q: How soon were the sanctions lifted after Dayton?

PERINA: The process of lifting sanctions started right away but it took some time. Lifting economic sanctions is actually not an easy task. In the U.S., it takes a Presidential directive to both impose and lift economic sanctions. Political sanctions are easier to work with. But changes in Serbia were noticeable right away. Within a few months, the economy was remarkably normalized. What did not change was what we called the "outer wall of sanctions," the sanctions we had decided to retain because of the Kosovo issue. These were mainly political sanctions related to recognition of Serbia-Montenegro, exchanging ambassadors and so on. They were largely symbolic, but Milosevic was furious when he realized they would not be lifted. This was the kind of political stigma he thought he had shaken at Dayton. It was the beginning of a real parting of ways between Milosevic and Holbrooke. It also marked a divergence between the U.S. and most of our European allies. The Europeans were not as concerned with Kosovo as we were and did not support the outer wall of sanctions. Most of them rushed to recognition and full normalization of diplomatic ties with Serbia. Unfortunately, this sent just the wrong message to the Kosovar Albanians.

Q: How did the Kosovar Albanians react to Dayton?

PERINA: They were of course disappointed that Dayton had done nothing to address their problems. Suddenly everyone was rejoicing that peace had returned to former Yugoslavia but Kosovo seemed to be forgotten. This was greatly damaging to Rugova's advocacy of non-violent resistance to Serb domination. Some Albanians were saying that precisely the lack of violence in Kosovo made it possible for Europeans to forget the issue. That is why we felt it essential to

maintain this outer wall of sanctions. It was a message to Milosevic but also to the Kosovar Albanians that we had not forgotten Kosovo. But it was not enough. It was in this period after Dayton that some of the Kosovar Albanians decided they had to rely more on themselves and started building the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which about a year later took everyone by surprise when suddenly the Albanians had an army.

Q: What was the role of Albania proper in all of this?

PERINA: I can't really say definitively but I think it was not large. The Albanian Albanians were having a lot of domestic problems, both political and economic. In many ways, the Kosovar Albanians were wealthier and better off than the Albanian ones. There was also a certain rivalry between Albanian leaders in Albania and Kosovo, almost a love-hate relationship. I think all of this minimized the role that Tirana played.

Q: I must say again, as an old hand in the area, I was surprised in later news footage how good Kosovo looked compared to how I remembered it.

PERINA: There was a legacy of better times in Yugoslavia. It was also my impression that the Kosovar Albanians coped with the international sanctions better than the Serbs. The borders of Kosovo were more porous to allow imports, and the Albanians have a reputation of being more mercantile. Even Serbs would tell me during the sanctions that anything could be obtained at the Kosovo open-air market. I don't know if there is any empirical data, but many people believed that the Kosovar Albanians were better off economically under the sanctions than the Serbs. Politically, of course, it was the reverse. The Serbs were in charge, and any Albanian who raised his head was quickly beaten down.

CARLF F. INDERFURTH
U.S. Representative for Special Political Affairs/Deputy U.S. Representative on U.N. Security Council, United Nations
New York (1993-1997)

Carl F. Inderfurth was born in Charlotte, NC in 1946. After attending the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, he continued on to Duke Divinity School. He served in the US Army Reserves shortly thereafter. During his career he has served on numerous committees, including the Senate Intelligence Committee. He was a Member of the National Security Council from 1977 to 1979. Mr. Inderfurth served as an ABC News correspondent for 11 years, which was followed by a position as USUN Ambassador and a position as Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia. He was interviewed in 2001 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: This was a new role for you. This is 1993. How did you see the position of the United States there and what your job was and how people went about it?

INDERFURTH: This was a time when there were great hopes for the UN and for peacekeeping. The Cold War was over. Peacekeepers had just a few years earlier been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. President Bush had given a speech at the General Assembly in September of '92 which focused on enhancing UN peacekeeping and was very supportive in terms of the U.S. role. I remember, during the transition, we looked at the fact that the U.S. was behind in paying its dues to the UN. President Bush had proposed a three year payback for those arrears. We thought, "Why should it take that long? Let's pay this off right away. We should be paying our dues on time and in full." A certain naivete there. Congress would prove to be a big obstacle in this regard. Ambassador Albright also referred at this time to a policy of "assertive multilateralism," meaning that while the United States would continue to play the leading role in the post-Cold War world, we also intended to work multilaterally with others, and to be assertive about it. In other words, we were not going to be the 'Lone Ranger' in foreign policy; we wanted to work with others to achieve our common aims and goals, including with the UN. So, it was a very positive approach that we took to New York.

But there were also two looming problems. The immediate issue was what was happening in Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia and, specifically, what to do about Milosevic and the attempt by the Serbs to "ethnically cleanse" Bosnia. Everyone was reading these horror stories in the press about the Balkans. The Balkans were at war. What would happen to Kosovo and Macedonia and Croatia? This was part of the breakup, the fallout if you will, of the end of the Cold War and the end of the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia was disintegrating. At the request of the UN Secretary-General, former Secretary Cyrus Vance and former British Foreign Secretary David Owen had pulled together the Vance-Owen Plan to deal with it.

The very first meeting that I attended with Madeleine in New York was one for the P5 [Permanent Five] members of the Security Council – the U.S., Russia, China, the France, and Britain. We met at the French mission, which was located on the 54th floor of a building near the UN and had a spectacular view of all of Manhattan and beyond. At the meeting were Cyrus Vance and David Owen to brief the P5 members on where things stood. I must admit that I was pretty awed by this – I had until just recently been working on the transition team in Washington and not too long before that at ABC News and all of a sudden I was in this diplomatic setting with the Ambassadors from Russia, China, France, and the UK, all very senior, seasoned diplomats. I remember thinking to myself: "I've got a lot of learning to do, quick, and a lot of listening."

At the same time, Ambassador Albright was also new to diplomacy and she knew that she had a lot of work to do to take on her new responsibilities. She was inexhaustible in doing so. That meeting was also very interesting because throughout her four-year stay in New York, Madeleine Albright took this issue head-on - Bosnia, Serbia, Milosevic, Croatia, Tudjman, UNPROFOR, setting up the War Crimes Tribunals, and the hours and hours of debate and resolutions in the Security Council trying to find some way to end the conflict, calling on Belgrade to stop its aggressive action. I think more than any other single issue, this defined her role at the UN and later as Secretary of State. She was determined to see America use its influence in whatever way it could, initially through diplomacy and dropping in food supplies to those who were being starved by Milosevic's thugs, and later by military force through NATO action. This is a story she will need to tell in her own words. But I think that her major policy legacy, the one that will

most define her eight years in government in the Clinton Administration, will be the advise she gave and the actions she initiated with respect to sorting out the tragedy in the Balkans.

Q: I was an election observer in Bosnia a couple of times. I remember being lectured once by a lady who said, "You gentlemen, if you have to relieve yourself, don't step off the side of the road. Stay on the pavement." You could see what it does. You'd see pastureland with tape around it saying not to go on there. It's terrible. Then you'd see people who had amputated limbs.

INDERFURTH: Madeleine took a trip to Angola as UN ambassador and she came back telling a story of going out into the countryside and seeing children tethered to trees by their mothers so that they would not wander out in the fields and step on land mines. This became one of her 'talking points' in Washington arguing for more action by the U.S.

All of this attention led, as I said earlier, to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines receiving the Nobel Prize in 1997. I hope the U.S. will take steps over the next few years to end the use of land mines. The Clinton Administration directed the Pentagon to search for alternatives and be prepared to sign the treaty by 2006. Of course, the U.S., and this is an important point, does not use what are called "dumb land mines," those that do not self-destruct over a period of time. And if the U.S. does use landmines, anti-personnel and anti-tank, they are mapped and then cleared afterwards. But the fact is that if we're going to see all nations of the world end the use of land mines, the U.S. will have to end its use as well. We can't say, "Well, because we use sophisticated "smart" land mines, those are acceptable, but your dumb ones are not." That kind of exceptionalism will not work.

Q: You had enough. Let's go to Bosnia.

INDERFURTH: Madeleine Albright did Bosnia, which was a major preoccupation from the day she arrived to the day she left to become Secretary of State. She was in the U.S. chair in the Security Council for this almost without exception. She was really our desk officer at the U.S. Mission for Bosnia, although we did have a great desk officer by the name of Stuart Seldowitz, a young foreign service officer. He worked on all the Security Council resolutions dealing with Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia. There were about 100 during our stay there, an enormous number. But when Bosnia came up, whether it be in the Security Council or with the P5 or with the Secretary General, Madeleine handled it. This was a major focus of hers, not only in New York but also in Washington in the NSC and with the President.

Q: You were part of the team.

INDERFURTH: Yes, but this was probably the biggest foreign policy issue from the standpoint of the U.S. government in the UN. For U.S. foreign policy, our relations with Russia, with China, and with the Middle East, those issues were Washington-dominant and largely bilateral in nature. But Bosnia was the multilateral issue of highest importance, hence Albright's focus on that in New York.

Q: Genocide.

INDERFURTH: That's right. I believe Madeleine, with her very strong personal and academic background in European affairs and Central Europe, understood the implications of what was happening in Bosnia better than many others. She wanted to see the U.S. exert influence in whatever would be the best to put that war out. When we first got to New York in '93, the peace plan of the moment was the Vance-Owen Plan. It never got off the ground, in part because the U.S. did not see it as workable. There were a great number of UN resolutions condemning what was happening in Bosnia. There was a UN peacekeeping presence there, known as UNPROFOR, that was not keeping peace and was barely a presence. The fighting continued and the horror stories of ethnic cleansing, of genocide, continued. Madeleine Albright saw earlier than most of her colleagues that at some point the threat of force would be required to back down Milosevic and those Bosnian Serb leaders that were intent on imposing their bloody will throughout the region. She took this on as a primary responsibility for herself at the UN and later as Secretary of State. I think to her great credit, that war was put out and today Milosevic is in jail, at the Hague, and standing before the International War Crimes Tribunal. Without a doubt, Madeleine Albright had as much to do as anyone to put him there.

Q: Were all of you enlisted in this effort in trying to do something about Bosnia?

INDERFURTH: We all had parts that we would play. There would be so many meetings Ambassador Albright could not attend them all – informal Security Council meetings, P5 and Contact Group meetings. Certainly when she was traveling we filled in on this issue.

She took several trips to Bosnia and the region during this time. But the focus of her attention was on Washington and getting the principals of the NSC to at least be open to the possibility of greater and more direct U.S. involvement, including military involvement if that were necessary.

Q: There was a considerable amount of bluster... I've interviewed our former ambassador to Yugoslavia, Warren Zimmerman, and made that point that air strikes could have probably taken care of particularly some of the Serb aggression.

INDERFURTH: Warren Zimmerman has written on this subject and knows it far better than I. But it is absolutely true that air strikes played an important role once they were used. And the threat of military force was an important factor and was used to great advantage by Richard Holbrooke, who was then the Assistant Secretary of State. He had the task of organizing the Dayton Conference. Dick is very determined, experienced, hard headed, and a tough negotiator. He spent a lot of time in that region trying to find a path toward a settlement. On one of those occasions his small party was traveling just outside Sarajevo when one of the armored personnel carriers carrying several members of the U.S. team went off the side of the road down a mountain. Three Americans died, one of whom I knew, Joe Kruzel, a contemporary of mine who was working at the Defense Department. It was very sad, a real tragedy.

In the end, Holbrooke was successful at Dayton. An agreement was reached and he played a very important role. But I also think Madeleine Albright had laid the groundwork for giving this issue greater attention and moving the President in the direction that he eventually took. I think she also had an ally in the National Security Adviser, Tony Lake, but this is a story that I imagine she is going to tell at much greater length than I can and with far greater authority and insight.

Q: What about the relationship of Madeleine Albright and Boutros-Ghali, the UN Secretary General?

INDERFURTH: That has received a great deal of attention since she was the one that cast the veto on the Security Council to deny him a second term. It was a lonely veto. We were the only negative vote. She had a cordial, correct relationship with the SYG [Secretary General]. This was not something personal. In fact, I know she was offended by some of the derogatory statements and offensive remarks made by some U.S. politicians about Boutros-Ghali, that these were uncalled for and unbecoming for the U.S. Many Republican leaders said that he was "running U.S. foreign policy," that the Clinton Administration had put him in charge. Well, those statements were clearly political. But then there were the constant references to his full name – Boutros Boutros-Ghali – said in almost a sneering fashion, putting down his 'foreign-ness.' I think Madeleine felt that crossed the line.

At the same time, she had – the Administration had – a number of concerns about his performance as Secretary General. He had not taken up the cause of UN reform. He ran the UN more as a personal fiefdom than as a hands-on manager. Ambassador Albright recognized that the UN risked losing the U.S. if reform steps were not taken; she knew in her dealings with Capitol Hill that there was a growing opposition to the UN because of all of these reports of waste, fraud, and abuse, and that we would never pay our dues on time or pay back our arrears as long as these things were not addressed in a serious, systematic fashion. Boutros did not appear the man for that job. U.S.- UN relations were becoming increasingly strained, for this and other reasons including his handling of Bosnia and the so-called "dual-key" controversy. So, the decision was taken that we would not support him for re-election. Many countries quietly agreed but they basically let us cast the veto and take the heat for doing what had not been done before, which was to deny an incumbent Secretary General a second term. He was representing the continent of Africa and there is an informal agreement about regions having two terms, then rotating. Our veto was of Boutros-Ghali, not Boutros-Ghali the African candidate. So we made it clear very early that we would be willing to consider another African candidate for that second term. Fortunately there already was one person from Africa that many believed could step into that position, a person that knew the UN very well, and that had a great deal of respect - and that was Kofi Annan of Ghana. So, after the veto of Boutros-Ghali, the African countries said, "We do want to continue to the practice of two terms" for each region. We said, "We can support that." Very quickly, it became clear that Kofi Annan would be the consensus choice for Secretary General, and he has done a great job, including on the reform issue.

MOLLY RAISER
Chief of Protocol, White House
Washington, DC (1993-1997)

Molly raiser was born in Buffalo, NY in August 1942. She got a B.S. in education from the University of Virginia. Ms. Raiser spent much of her career in service to the Democratic Party. She served under Pat Moynihan and was Chief of Protocol

for the White House in 1993. She retired in 1997. Ms. Raiser was interviewed in November 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Let's start by Sarajevo, this was certainly after the war in Bosnia ended but still a very tense time.

RAISER: We were fired on, I think.

Q: How did this work? This was not an ordinary type of thing to go into.

RAISER: It was one of the few times we did not fly commercial. We were taken in an army C-something or other, one of those big transport planes. There were about eight of us in there. We arrived and were taken to the embassy. Basically, they were set up very poorly. Then we went to a Holiday Inn to spend the night. Half of the hotel had been bombed away. Quite an experience! Then, we drove around and saw the city. As I say, I was stunned. I had obviously never been in a war zone. Then, of course, the Secret Service said, "No, we can't do this right now." Then, they went back and did it later when I was no longer Chief of Protocol. No, I'm sorry, I was Chief of Protocol when he went back. He went on a trip but he did not go into Sarajevo. He went to an army camp, Tuzla.

I must say another thing that interests me about these trips is the communications system. They set up their own independent communications systems. So at the Hungarian Camp, which was muddy and horrible, and while he was being briefed by generals about what was going on, I went to the back of the tent and there was no one using the phones. You could literally pick up the phone, and an operator would say, "Yes ma'am?" I could say, please get me ----------. Within five seconds I could be talking to one of my best friends in Buffalo, New York. They do that wherever they go. It's a miracle as far as I'm concerned.

Q: Was there any problem with the cooperation of the military?

RAISER: No. Again, I have much higher appreciation for the military than I did when I went in. The military, like the Secret Service, did do whatever it could as long as it didn't endanger the President's life. Of course, it allowed the President to be there. They wanted him to come and see what was going on, so they went out of their way to be as accommodating as they could. When asked to put up a base in Hungary within two weeks there were barracks, dining facilities, an intensive care hospital, communications center - all in what had originally been a muddy field. And no whining about it!

Q: I would image that the President would almost have felt under a certain amount of pressure to do this because he had not been in the military service, which had been a political issue. To go to Bosnia, in a way, was winning his stripes. Did you feel, as you were going on this advance thing, that, just personally or from people in the White House, "He really has to go here," or something like that?

RAISER: We felt from the beginning that he had to go there. I thought he had to go there simply because he was so involved and should see in person the situation. I think if we'd bombed

earlier, this perhaps would not have gotten as bad as it has gotten. Yes. Everyone felt very strongly that he should go, except once we got to Sarajevo we realized that it was still too dangerous, especially after our plane was fired on. It had nothing to do with "earning his stripes."

Q: Does anybody know who fired on it?

RAISER: It was in *The New York Times* that we had been fired on. We were sitting there and all of a sudden three or four young soldiers who were in this enormous plane jumped up on the seats. We looked around. Some of us were sitting in the floor playing cards. We asked, "What happened," and they said, "We were just fired upon." I said, "How did you know?" One said, "Because we saw tracers." I guess when a missile starts to come up, the plane's radar can see it coming and puts out something hot so that the missile heads towards that instead of towards the airplane. I said, "That will be an interesting story to tell my grandchildren." We don't know exactly who fired the missile.

Q: How about any other advance trips?

RAISER: All the ones to Russia were great as well as the one to the Philippines. I loved the one to Japan. Advance trips are the best part of the job.

HENRY ALLEN HOLMES
Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense
Arlington, VA (1993-1999)

Henry Allen Holmes was born in Bucharest, Rumania in January 1933. He Attended St. Paul's and continued on to Princeton where he graduated from in 1954. Mr. Holmes entered the Foreign Service in 1957. He has held many positions within the Department of State and positions abroad in Yaoundé, Rome, Paris, and was Ambassador to Portugal in 1982. He was interviewed in 1999 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: *Well, you know, those of us that have been around for a while know about the military. There's always been this annoyance, from World War II on, the commandos and all taking the cream off and going off on these special missions and all, which sort of raises hob with regular units and all. I would have thought that you would have found yourself in the very difficult position with sort of the mainline forces looking upon you all as the Cinderellas, getting special money, and all that.*

HOLMES: Yes, it was very difficult. Beginning back in 1986 approximately - that was, of course, several years before I arrived on the scene - the formation of the Special Operations Command met the combined resistance of all the services. First of all, they didn't like the fact that their special operations people were being removed from the regular services and put into a special command. Traditionally when there were periods of cutbacks, that cycle that the Defense Department like other departments of government goes through, they found it convenient to use

their special operations people to cut, when they had to take cuts. The Army, for example, was very oriented towards the "heavy" Army, towards armor and heavy artillery. After all, this command was born during the Cold War, when our mission was to withstand the Soviet Army across the north German plain or through the Fulda Gap, and so their major budget requests were directed towards improving, basically, their heavy armament. And so the idea of special units - light infantry trained in special tactics - were a sort of nice-to-have add-on to what their main concentration was on. Now what was remarkable about the formation of this unit was the prescience of then-Senator Bill Cohen and Sam Nunn and Representative Dan Daniels, who at the height of the Cold War, with the emphasis on strategic systems and heavy armor and so forth, had the prescience to look beyond the Cold War to a day when it would be important to have a command like this with its own resources - and that really is the key. Something called Major Force Program 11 (MFP-11) was a special budget for the Special Operations Command. No other command has its own budget. And the commander in chief of the Special Operations Command had what they call head-of-agency authority, which allowed him to work with a budget of over $3 billion. Most of that is a classic Defense Department budget. The majority, over 50 percent, went to pay allowances and training. But they did have their own development budget basically to perform research, development, testing, and evaluation of special-operations-peculiar equipment. What they did was to take the normal equipment that was available in the armed services and outfit the special operators with those and then adapt some of that equipment to the needs of their mission and also develop and procure additional equipment. And this is unique, and it did incite a certain jealousy among the traditional commands. Now you have to understand that the command basically is a training command. They take the cream - the selection process is rigorous in these training programs - the cream of the Army, Navy, and air and helicopter pilots and develop them, train them, select them, and then feed them back to the regional war-fighting commands, the five regional commands, some of them assigned on a regular basis and others available for assignment based on the mission that might be given a particular-

Q: *So they're not just a sitting group. They train, put them back, and then they can call in when they need it.*

HOLMES: That's right. An example would be in the early period of the Bosnia effort, the intervention force and the stabilization force - I-4 and S-4. During that period at least half of the 352nd Special Operations Group of the Air Force Special Operations Command, which is stationed in England, in Mendenhall, was forward-deployed in Brindisi, in Italy. They had C-130s there for rescue operations. The had some Pave Low 53 J helicopters. They had some AD-130 gunships to provide support. And they had a platoon of Navy Seals there as well, and their mission was to rescue downed flyers, basically. That was their major mission. And then they would rotate them out of England. And then when they needed reinforcements - because the AC-130 gunships, for example, are never assigned forward on a permanent basis; they're always kept back at Hurlburt Field, which is the headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command, and then as needed, they're deployed forward and assigned to the regional CINC and as part of, in that case, the European Special Operations Command. There is a small unit. The European and the Pacific ones were the two most robust, probably 1,800 to 2,000 people permanently deployed as part of that command and then reinforced as necessary from assets drawn from the United States. If they needed for an operation, let's say, an airfield take-down operation, and they

needed a battalion of Rangers, then the Ranger Regiment part of the Army Special Operations Command would forward-deploy a battalion, integrated into that force under the command of the regional CINC, and then that mission would be carried out in that way. But it caused a lot of jealousy. It was fiercely resisted by the services when this command was first set up.

Q: *The command was first set up when?*

HOLMES: It was 1986, and by the end of 1987 they were really fully in business. But they were fiercely resisted, and the Navy, for example, never completely agreed to give up all of its seals, so that the naval special warfare command in Coronado, which was the Navy part of Special Operations, had to rotate their Seals in and out of the fleet as well, because the fleet commanders liked to have detachments of Seals on board for their mission. So there was always a certain amount of jealousy there, although that situation has been improved tremendously over the years, as the command grew in respect and was finally recognized. I would say that by 1994 or 95, the command was fully recognized and greatly appreciated because of their capabilities and the kind of missions that the armed forces in the '90s were being asked to perform. They really came into their own at that point.

Q: *Well, was this command the ultimate result of the failed mission to rescue the hostages in Iran?*

HOLMES: Yes. You're absolutely right. What they called Desert One, which was the place where the rescue mission was aborted in the spring of 1980 - if memory serves me correctly. The takeover of the embassy in Teheran was November 4, approximately, 1979. By the following spring, the administration had put together a rescue force which was made up of Air and Army commandos, and they had never trained together, their equipment was inappropriate for the mission, it was skimpy, it was hastily convened. I mean, it was a classic example of bad preparation, bad equipment, and bad planning. And it ended in failure - despite the gallantry of individual members - in the desert when a couple of helicopters were down. And then when they aborted the mission, in the sandstorm and the darkness taking off, they crashed into each other and had quite a few losses. Well, that led to various investigative commissions. One of them, I believe, was carried out by Admiral Holloway, and then after a number of soul-searching examinations of this failure, a conclusion was that the armed services needed to have a regular special operations unit of some sort to be able to carry out this kind of mission. And the goal was always to have equipment - helicopters and/or aircraft - that could depart and carry out a mission under the cover of one period of darkness, because that was one of the problems in Desert One, the question of refueling - the aircraft that they had did not have long legs and allow them to get all the way to Teheran and... I mean, basically they had a very thorough plan and some very good people recruited who were already on the ground in Teheran. I mean they had special operators that were already there, Farsi-speaking, that had made contact with people and who were doing the arrangements at the other end. And when things went sour, they just quietly disappeared, got out of Iran. But that was really the crucible within which the Special Operations Command of today was born, and it is a remarkable growth in capability because today there's no question but that they're the finest special operations capability anywhere in the world - highly motivated, extremely well trained, well equipped, well led, and now, as I say, fully respected and integrated into the war-fighting commands. In fact, for example in Europe, the real discovery was General

Joulwan, when he was the commander in chief of the European Command. He had not known much about his special operations command until they had to mount the Bosnia mission, and all of a sudden he had this superb capability available, and he suddenly began to notice that for example the finest helicopter pilots in the world... They did all their training at night, and they could perform small miracles in mobility and the ability to get in in a quiet way and do things. Then when Secretary Brown's aircraft went down-

HOLMES: And so you have a whole new generation of young leaders that are coming into office that have no military experience, don't understand the culture, and don't quite know how to use the national security apparatus as an underpinning. Now that said, and that does present problems, and what is ironic is this problem of having a casualty-free military exercise, because it's really quite ironic because, first of all, it's a volunteer force. We're not talking about a draft today. Everybody who goes into the armed forces today must know or certainly is told that at some point in their career they may be put in harm's way, and they're volunteering to do that. And most of them accept that. Certainly going into the Gulf War there were only a handful of people that, I think, refused to go and said, "We didn't sign up to go into combat; we signed up to get a college degree at night time with the help of the military." But our military are absolutely prepared to go into harm's way and to do the job that they are hired and trained to do. It's basically the fear of political repercussions. And of course in this age of instant communications - and the press is everywhere - it basically has an almost paralyzing effect on some political leaders today. It's true, because in other democracies we don't have the same.. The French, for example, have a rather high tolerance for losses. People forget that the French stood up and did their job in Bosnia long before we got there.

Q: *Yes, under the UN, and they took real losses.*

HOLMES: The French and the British. The French, I think, lost in total something like 60 or 70 people in fighting, carrying out that very unpleasant... during the UN protection force era. So they have more of a tolerance. The British have more of a tolerance as well. The Germans, remarkably - I mean the Germans have a very special problem because of the baggage from World War II, and now we're seeing for the first time German infantry actually deployed in Kosovo, which is a quite remarkable evolution. But we have a problem in that _____. There's no question about it. We have a serious problem because we lose more people in training in the United States. We lose a lot of people, because our people train hard. And there are accidents - regrettable, and you try to avoid them, but it's a serious problem, because we are going to be called upon more and more, and some of the missions are political-military missions. They're humanitarian missions, as we're seeing today in Kosovo. That's a humanitarian mission, but it's dangerous as hell.

Q: *Just today, two British soldiers were killed by mines.*

HOLMES: Yes, two Gurkhas.

Q: *Two Gurkhas. First losses in that. Let's talk about Bosnia, because this is the big thing for you when you were there - you know, the thing - how did that develop from your perspective? Were we sort of sitting on the sidelines thinking about, Gee, we're going to go in sometime,*

making plans, but... You know, at first we were saying this is a European operation; let them take care of it, and all that. What was your perspective?

HOLMES: My perspective is that I think that when the Clinton Administration came into office, they did a very poor job of assuming the mantle of leadership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. When Secretary of State Warren Christopher made his first trip after coming into office to the North Atlantic Council, he announced that he was there to listen. I found this absolutely extraordinary. The allies didn't quite know what to make of it, because traditionally they gripe, they complain, they fight, they quarrel, they leak to the press about the heavy-handedness of the United States, but they expect the United States to lead. This is the way it's always been, and here comes the Secretary of State who says he's there to listen. For the first year, approximately - maybe more than a year, closer to maybe to a year and a half - of the Clinton Administration, I would say that the Administration is guilty of default of leadership in NATO. And I'm giving you this sort of back-looking perspective because I think it has a lot to do with what we eventually ended up doing in Bosnia. In other words, there were two force lines that emerged, that resulted in our commitment to the Bosnia peacekeeping operation known as IFOR. One was, of course, the Dayton Accords, but the other was this very wobbly NATO leadership. I believe that by the time that decision was made, it was understood that we had done a poor job of leading NATO, despite the strong efforts of SACEUR, of General Shalikashvili and the Partnership for Peace, which was I think a great undertaking. But we had done a poor job. We had criticized the UN protection force and our allies were in there, and they wanted us to be there but we weren't. So finally, it seems to me that this was an opportunity not only to try to do something about putting some stability back into the Balkans as a result of the Dayton Accords, but also it was a question of NATO leadership. So we went into that - finally - and I was, frankly, very pleased to see us take our natural place in that effort, with three zones carved out, one by us, one by the British, and one by the French, with the overall command being an American officer. It was the way it should have been at the beginning, in my view.

Q: *Was there a certain amount of restiveness as we watched this thing develop, particularly the Serbs were bullying the UN - it's the only way. I mean, here were you know I mean they were humiliating these peacekeepers by including killing a vice president of Bosnia in a French troop carrier.*

HOLMES: Yes, it was very restive, and people were very upset. And I remember a small Dutch platoon that was at a killing spree in Srebrenica, which was-

Q: Yes, you know, they were surrounded by a thousand bloodlust troops, and they were something like a platoon or so, and there really wasn't much they could do, but they shouldn't have been put in that position.

HOLMES: They shouldn't have been put in that position, and the Dutch were angry. They were angry, humiliated, and determined to get back into things. And then later on, of course, they did participate in arresting some of the war criminals in Bosnia. But it was a very bad situation, and it really only changed after the Dayton Accords. And of course we did the bombing, that first bombing run, which brought them to the table and resulted in the agreement - with Milosevic, of course, participating. But that finally worked out, and I must say, by the time I visited Bosnia, for

the first and only time in the last summer, the summer of 1998, I went and visited our Special Operations Forces in Italy, Brindisi, Sarajevo, went up to Tuzla and then to Bircko and then on to Europe, Stuttgart and the United Kingdom. Things had really turned around by that time, and they were operating extremely well together, not only in the American sector but also with their British and French and Italian and other NATO allies.

Q: *I would have thought that there would be a problem in our special operations because we had such a high degree of using technology - I mean it's extremely important - and equipment. And I would have thought that, say, particularly the British, the French and the Germans would be maybe one step down or something like that. Or how did that work?*

HOLMES: Well, actually, curiously, I'm going to say something that may surprise you. The thing that marks the difference is really the quality of the people, much more than the equipment, because actually the British and the French are pretty well equipped as well, but it's the quality of the training. I think that your average US special operator - that one who stays for a while, the senior noncommissioned officer - he's probably had $200,000 of training put in him - per individual. And I saw this in Bircko, when I visited... I don't know if I recounted this in an earlier session, but in Bircko I visited what was called a Joint Commission Operations house - JCO. In Bircko, in just a regular little house, living in the community, were eight US special forces soldiers wearing uniforms, the fatigues, BDUs, without any rank or unit insignia. All they had on their uniforms was US ARMY and their name. And the reason for that was that they were all so competent and they didn't want people that they were working with to know who's the officer or who's the senior non-commissioned officer. They were all sergeants, one warrant officer, and a young captain. Between them they had a remarkable assemblage of language skills. Among the eight they had Serbo-Croatian, German, Russian, Ukrainian, French, and Polish - terrific assembly there, number of European languages. They were able to go around, and they would go around without helmets or Kevlar vests or weapons. They would go around in pairs, either on foot or in a vehicle, and just make themselves known and get to know the various ethnic communities and talk to them and find out what their problems were. And they would frequently be called in to sort of adjudicate little neighborhood squabbles. It was a remarkable operation. And this was really based on the quality of the people, that they were able to do that in their training. And they were the eyes and ears of the IFOR or SFOR command in Sarajevo. And they would report back what was going on, and they'd talk with the US ambassador there, who was a kind of an international civil servant trying to adjudicate problems at the sort of government level in Bircko.

And this was a successful effort, and the other allies began to take up that mission, because we had those little JCO houses scattered throughout Bosnia, but we didn't have enough people, and eventually the British and French decided they were going to do the same thing, so there was a great deal of coordination and sort of cross-training and discussion with our allies. And the French have now a special operations force, a command that is designed along the lines of the US command. In fact, when they set it up, in about 1993-94, they spent a lot of time in Tampa talking with the leadership down there of the Special Operations and to see how they did it. So it's sort of modeled on the US model. And they were very selective and put a lot of emphasis on training. But they are in an early phase of their development because they are encountering the same resistance that our people did from their regular forces and not used as much as they should

be. The British, of course, have a longer tradition. The SAS and their special boat units had been in business for a long time, and they don't have the same problems.

Q: *Was there any thought about, you know, we were trying this Partnership for Peace, to bring the Russians into this? Was there any contact between your operations and our operations?*

HOLMES: Yes, there was. This is another mission that the Special Operations Command has, which is what they call liaison missions with foreign forces. In fact, Norman Schwarzkopf called them "The glue that kept the alliance together" in the desert war, because they had these little teams that, using their language skills, went out to the various allied commands. Probably for the first time since World War II we actually ended up in Bosnia with a Russian unit assigned to an American officer, with a sort of tortuous chain of command. The European special operations command recruited a young, fluent Russian-speaking Special Forces captain, who was assigned with a communicator and an intelligence NCO - a small team of three or four people - to be assigned to the Russian headquarters, and they made a difference in terms of connecting that Russian unit with the US command - fluent Russian-speaking. They provided them with communications with this command, with intelligence, and a certain understanding of how the US Army and the NATO force was operating in the field, and made a huge difference. So that was successful, and they went instinctively, by design, the commander-in-chief of our forces in Europe turned to that command because they knew that that was the place to recruit the right kind of coalition support team.

Q: *What was the feeling you were getting from the Pentagon about the expansion of NATO, to Poland, to Hungary, to the Czech Republic?*

HOLMES: Well, of course, they supported it, because at that time, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was John Shalikashvili, who had been a very successful SACEUR in Europe and who actually came up... He was the father of the idea of the Partnership for Peace. Now there were some people, and I'm one of them, that had a different view - that it wasn't necessary to expand the Alliance so quickly and to risk having an increasingly clumsy organization. As it was at 16, with a consensus rule at the heart of NATO decisions, it was very difficult to operate, and we could see what was happening. And now it's 19 and growing. And our feeling was that it wasn't necessary to move so rapidly - I mean the people that saw it the way I did, that the partnership for peace should have been something that had much more body and mission attached to it. It could have been part of a very long vetting process. In other words, by having non-NATO European allies - the new ones from the old Warsaw Pact - participate in Partnership for Peace exercises, they could have learned from the prospect, they could have seen what was required over the long pull to become a fully participating member of the Alliance, and they could have acquired a kind of an associate status with the Alliance - and giving them already a sense of community which would have psychologically given them some sense of ease vis-à-vis Russia, which is one reason they all wanted to get into NATO quickly - without encumbering the alliance with all of the liabilities that we have seen by the early entry of these countries. But of course the decision went elsewhere and was made.

Q: *It was a major domestic political imperative in this one, too.*

HOLMES: There was. And my own feeling was that it was not necessary, that there was another way to do this that would have been a more gradual process and more manageable over the long term, but anyway, it was done. You know, there were different views in the Pentagon, but once the decision was made, people just put their shoulders to it and made it work.

Q: *Well, Allen, is there anything else we should cover, do you think?*

HOLMES: I don't think so. I think we've pretty well sketched the landscape of what was going on - except to say that... I just might finish by saying that I really do believe that if you look back over the last five years at what the armed forces of the United States have been doing, basically political-military work, led by, not exclusively done by but led by, the Special Operations Forces, the kind of work, counter-terrorism, counter-drug, civic and humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, peacekeeping - all these activities, which are basically civil military responses to complex humanitarian crises of different varieties around the world, this is what the armed forces have been doing. Now there's a very interesting debate that is already underway as to whether this is appropriate. Is this what the armed forces should be doing? Is this an appropriate use of the members of the armed forces and of the budget of the Defense Department, to get increasingly involved in this kind of work abroad and to some degree domestically? There is a lot of discussion going on now about homeland defense, and so I think there has been an early chapter where they have proven to be of benefit to the country, not just as the security underpinning of foreign policy, but at a higher level of engagement very much involved with the Department of State, AID, and other agencies of our government in the conduct of foreign relations. I think there's a good question that remains now: is this going to be the pattern as we go into the 21st century? Should it be? Should we resist it? Should we maintain a more traditional view of the preparation and equipping of our armed forces? Should it be more strategic? These are unanswered questions.

JON DAVID GLASSMAN
Bosnia Training and Equipment Program
(1994)

Jon David Glassman went to the University of Southern California where he received a Bachelor of Foreign Service degree. He then attended Columbia University where he completed his masters and eventually a Ph. D. Mr. Glassman entered the Foreign Service in 1968. He has since served in Washington, Madrid, Moscow, Havana, Mexico City, El Salvador, Kabul, and was Ambassador to Paraguay. He was interviewed in 1997 by Peter Moffat.

GLASSMAN: At the time of the Dayton Accords, the Administration in order to please the Republican members of Congress who objected to our arms embargo against the Bosnian Muslim had agreed lead an international effort to arm the Bosnian federation. Darryl asked if I would be willing to replace him. I said I would do so. I went over there in April 1996. Upon my arrival we found that the Congress had agreed to provide a $100,000,000 dollars of United States drawdown military equipment for the armed forces but no real achievements had been realized

yet in terms of gathering international funds. They had a donors conference in Ankara which Strobe Talbot, the Deputy Secretary, attended but there were no pledges. Second of all they had no bank account for any pledges they received, so first I contacted the Treasury Department. They worked out a mechanism whereby foreign government donors would be able to put money in the United States Treasury similar to the Foreign Military Sales account the Saudis and others have. Our innovation was that the donor governments would be allowed to maintain title to their funds. We would never take title to funds, meaning that wouldn't require congressional legislation since we never would own the funds and nor would the Bosnians. At this point, we sent out some presidential letters and Mack McCarty, one of the White House advisors, went out one weekend to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates and got some pledges. Our pledges finally totaled $147,000,000 dollars. Then we, of course, engaged in intensive follow-up effort to secure the deposits in cash in the United States Treasury. We designed a system whereby we would exchange notes with the donor country establishing these accounts and we established a system whereby the Bosnians would request a purchase. They would sign a contract or purchase services such as training and we would then convey these to individual donors and they would decide whether or not they wished to use their money for this purpose. This turned out to work very well indeed. We secured a full 100 percent funding of pledges and never had any serious refusal in terms of cooperation. We then had to figure out a way in which we could buy military equipment which had to be inexpensive. The Bosnians' advisors had told them to buy NATO equipment but this was much too expensive for the amount of funds gathered. We were concerned the Eastern Europeans, particularly those of Orthodox religion, would back the Serbs and not agree to sell arms to Bosnia. We had resistance to overcome. But, through various trips, we were able to get the Ukranian government to agree, the Romanian government to agree, Slovak government, Turkey, Egypt to agree to supply things. Then we helped the Bosnians negotiate contracts, and submitted them to the donor states who agreed to fund them. We have an ongoing policy now in which all but 30 million dollars have been disbursed and the Bosnians are much more capable than they were before.

Q: Does the program continue and do you have a successor?

GLASSMAN: Right, I was replaced by a man named Steve Geis. The head of the program is a fellow named Jim Purdew, a civil servant. They are going to see whether they are going to raise some more funds, which is critical. The interesting thing politically is this program, which the CIA believes is a bad program, because it has created a threat to stability rather than a reinforcement of stability, while the Pentagon also dislikes it because they want to be even-handed. All this is a one sided program and Western Europeans, who are leaning very much toward the Serb side, also oppose it. We can sustain the program simply due to the fact that there is an emotional attachment to the Bosnians, victims of aggression, and because the White House promised the Republicans that they would do this.

Q: What is the attitude of the Croatians considering that it's technically a Federation armed force?

GLASSMAN: The Federation, of course, is made up of the Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats. They've been willing to go along because they also fear a Serb renewal of aggression. Bosnia is landlocked, so we have to bring in our heavy equipment through the Croatian port of

Ploce. The Islamic states did not really want to help the Croatians because they knew that the Croatians at one point attacked the Muslims. They feel no loyalty towards them. What we'd do is tell the donors that the federation concept is necessary. We need access to those Croatian ports. In the period before the United States entered the game, Iran was the backer of Bosnia. They never were able to bring in one tank, but we brought in dozens of tanks, lots of ammunition. It's essential to have Croatia on-side to allow that kind of equipment to be brought in. In the event of war, of course, you don't want a two front war with the Serbs attacking on one side, Croats on the other, so its important to keep them on board. So we designed an armed forces structure within Bosnia so that the Bosnia Croat units get a substantial portion, about one third of the assistance.

Q: I'm struck by how much of your career involved the Cold War either directly in relationships with the Soviet Union or more indirectly in other parts of the world and I'm also struck by the extent of your contact with and working with some of the great men of the period. Do you have any valedictory comments about these common threads or other aspects of your career as a whole?

GLASSMAN: The Cold War was a great organizer and inspirer in a sense that we knew where the enemy was. We saw attempts to reduce tension such as Kissinger's detente early in the 1970s and we saw the limits of that as the Soviets began to press their imperial efforts. It was a great opportunity to participate in these historical events. As you see, in the post-Cold War world, things like Bosnia become inherently more controversial because U.S. equities are confused and also our instruments for influencing become more limited. Before, we could count on congressional appropriations for the armed forces or the Agency to fund their efforts. Now international donations are increasingly necessary. These are inherently both limited in quantity and also require a different kind of justification. I don't think we've adequately coped with or understood what that involves. In terms of the decision making structure and people participating in it, the thing that obviously rings out is that we have had a conflict with our apparatus as we did with the players on the outside. Maybe because America's a rich country, we can afford duplicating bureaucracies and functions and competing players. That might be a good thing and perhaps, in a sense of free market of ideas, good comes out of it but my reflection is that I've seen a lot more time wasted on internecine warfare than what was necessary or functional. I think it's clear that some redesign of the way we do policy to some more orderly system would be in order. All the Foreign Service Officers and people from other agencies with whom I worked obviously dedicated their lives to our country's service. You wonder, however, if the result of their efforts were perhaps as great as they might have been if there was another way of doing business. That's my brief commentary.

BILHA BRYANT
Yugoslavia Desk Officer
Washington, DC (1994)

Bilha Bryant was born in 1934 in Bulgaria. Bryant served in the Israeli Army and worked in the private sector before joining the Israeli Foreign Service in 1959.

Bryant resigned from the Israeli Foreign Service and married Edward (Ted) Bryant in 1963. With her husband, Bryant was assigned overseas to Mozambique, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Korea and India. Bryant then began to work for the State Department and served in the Soviet Bureau, Eastern European Affairs and Congressional Relations. Bryant was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: When you are moving into this, the real thing in a way shifted over rather quickly into Yugoslavia.

BRYANT: Very quickly indeed. This job for me became the most important and stressful work I have ever done. I remained the public affairs officer for Eastern Europe, but really most of my work revolved around Yugoslavia. At that point, the three central European countries were being reorganized into another office. There was nothing happening in Bulgaria. Romania quieted down; except for the Romanian orphans issue also took a lot of my time. Americans are kind hearted and love children. And when they read in the papers about the tragic situation, everybody wanted to adopt a Romanian orphan. But then when the Romanian orphans started trickling into the U.S., the adoptive parents realized how sick those kids were - many had AIDS also - there came the letters and the pleas for help. This was a large and complex project I had to carry.

When I finished with this project I moved to the Yugoslav desk. Then it all started. I am not a great political scientist-but even I knew that we were handling the problems of Yugoslavia badly. I remember writing letters for the signature of President Bush, which showed in no uncertain terms the indecision and flip-flopping of the administration on the issue. If we had put our foot down there and then and shown Serbia our determination to prevent the conflict, we would have saved 200,000 people who died for nothing and a lot more misery for everyone in the country.

Q: Did you get a feel for why we were doing it that way?

BRYANT: What we kept saying was it's really none of our business since these people had been fighting for something or another throughout history. This was wrong. During the 50 or so years of Communist regime, the people of Yugoslavia lived in peace, in the same neighborhoods or small villages. They intermarried and had children, so it possible for them to live peacefully. And we kept saying, and I remember I kept writing it over and over again, "The people of Yugoslavia have fought for the last 500 years, and they fought over Kosovo, etc. We do not want to get involved."

Q: How were the officers dealing with Yugoslavia on this?

BRYANT: The officers who knew Yugoslavia wanted us to do something to prevent what came next. Our ambassador in Belgrade, Warren Zimmerman, whom I liked very much, wanted us to really slap the wrist of Milosevic. He wrote many letters to Congress and other organizations giving examples of Milosevic’s politics, and urging the U.S. Government to do something about this man. He rightly predicted that Milosevic would make havoc in Yugoslavia." But nobody seemed to listen and I don't honestly know why.

I must say, I really had a great deal of admiration Deputy Secretary Eagleburger who had served as a third secretary and an Ambassador to Yugoslavia and I've written a lot of letters that he signed without much fuss or too many changes. Yet, Eagleburger insisted that these people (the Yugoslavs) hate each other and will kill each other at any opportunity. “We cannot and should not help.” The Europeans were reluctant as well; worrying that all the refugees from the conflict will end up in their countries. The charitable organizations were the only ones who got involved, by providing food and shelter to the affected population, but couldn’t of course stop the fighting.

Q: Did you sense, as things developed, the siege of Sarajevo, the massacre at Srebrenica, and on?

How were these things hitting you?

BRYANT: It had become a very difficult place to work. All of us on the Yugoslav Desk were very, very unhappy that after all our hard work, we couldn’t stop the bloodshed. We were faced daily with reports describing in details the massacres of innocent people that occurred in many places. I remember reading about 16 or 17 Bosnians who got on a train for Sarajevo and never arrived there. Later on their bodies were found in a mass grave. We had to read the reports about the terrible rapes and just horrible situations-a young Muslim woman in Sarajevo who was raped by Serbs not being able to tell her parents about it not to bring shame on the family. And with all of that going on, we sat there and wrote platitudes. We are the most powerful nation in the world. If we had said to Milosevic, "Stop it. If not, we will drop a bomb in the middle of Belgrade"-just say it, don't do it. But we kept saying we would not get involved. Milosevic is a bully, and we all knew he was a bully. You have to use different tactics with a bully and yet we treated him like a normal man.

Q: There were several resignations, I think three men who were working there. Did that have any effect?

BRYANT: Three young men. I was working very closely with them. That was very sad because they were good officers and brilliant young men. One of them actually worked for the Secretary before he came to the desk. I though they all had very, good reasons to resign. I remember doing the press release and giving it for clearance to one of the officers-they were working then on Sarajevo. He would look at it carefully make some small changes and say: "Great, this sounds good. It is strong." I had become very ego-involved in the conflict and liked the approval of my direct superiors. But then the press release might not even come back to our office, but we would listen to the press conference and realize that nothing was left of our original document. We were very upset, disappointed and demoralized.

Q: Was it coming from the State Department up above, or was it the White House?

BRYANT: I really think it was coming from the White House, but State had a lot to do with it.

Q: Tell me something. You were there. I got the impression-and please correct me or explain it-but his spokesperson was Margaret Tutwiler, and I had the feeling that Bush had a coterie about him, led by Margaret Tutwiler, who were mainly out to make sure that Baker looked good for a

future presidential run. And you know, secretaries of state are the people who have to deal with bad news, and they had better not start worrying about how they look and start worrying about policy. Did you have that feeling?

BRYANT: I am afraid you are right. One of the things we kept hearing about our possible involvement in Yugoslavia was, "We get involved, and when the first Americans come back in bags, then we'll have hell to pay." And Baker did not want that; he wanted the pure image of an American patriot. And I am afraid the public opinion was very much the same. Hundreds of people would call the desk and ask that we do something for the people of Yugoslavia, but as soon as you mention sending our military to help, the tone of support would change. "I hope you're not going to send anybody to Yugoslavia to fight and die." So it was not an easy decision for the President and the Secretary to make. Maybe it's only the way I felt, but the work continued to be hard and the morale was getting lower and lower, and I thought, I don't want to be here any longer.

JOSIAH BEEMAN
Ambassador
New Zealand (1994-1999)

Josiah Beeman was born and Raised in San Francisco, CA. He attended Reed College and then Hastings School of Law at the University of California at Berkeley. Mr. Beeman has spent most of his career in Democratic Party Politics. In 1994 he was a political appointee for the Ambassadorship to New Zealand. Josiah Beeman was interviewed in May 2001 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Did Yugoslavia, Kosovo tragedy and the events there play much in New Zealand?

BEEMAN: It played, yes, and got pretty good coverage. Of course, they participated in IFOR at our request. That was one of the other things we asked them to do and they did.

Q: Could you explain what IFOR was?

BEEMAN: It's intervention. I used to know what the initials stood for, but now I have forgotten. Basically, it was the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) intervention force into Bosnia and Herzegovina to stop the genocide that was going on, and it was very successful in doing that. The Kiwis participated in that at our request. New Zealand received a number of refugee families as a result of that. There were a few Serbs in New Zealand who tried to back-fill on the issue, but I think they were totally drowned out in the New Zealand media by sympathy with the Albanians who were the principle subjects, but not exclusively, of the ethnic cleansing. It got good coverage and there was no quarrel with the United States role in that, that came to my attention.

ROBERT M. BEECROFT
Special Envoy
Sarajevo, Bosnia Federation (1996-1997)

While Mr. Beecroft served as Political Officer at a number of posts in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, his primary focus was on Political/Military Affairs, both in Washington and abroad. Later in his career he served as Special Envoy to the Bosnia Federation and subsequently as Ambassador to the Office of Security & Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) operating in Bosnia & Herzegovina. A native of New Jersey, Mr. Beecroft served in the US Army and studied at the University of Pennsylvania and the Sorbonne in Paris before joining the Foreign Service in 1967. Mr. Beecroft was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

Q: Today is the 23rd of November, 2004. Bob, Sarajevo, '96, what was the situation at the time you went there?

BEECROFT: I arrived in August. The shooting had stopped six months earlier. It was -- I wouldn't even call it a country, it was a collection of peoples who were still in a state of collective shock at what they had done to themselves and each other. You soon began hearing tales of those first few days in the spring of 1992, when Sarajevo was first targeted by Serb cannon and tanks and mortars. Everybody, whatever their ethnicity, all said the same thing: this is obviously just a passing phase. It won't last. Well, it did last. It lasted for three and a half years. People are still getting over it. I can tell you because I just left there last July, when I finished my second tour in Sarajevo. The first time, in '96, I went out as Special Envoy to the Bosnian Federation. There are two so-called entities inside Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of them is primarily, but not totally Croat and Bosniak, Bosniak being Muslim. That's the Federation. The other is overwhelmingly Serb, the so-called Republika Srpska, or RS. Now, at that time the RS was sort of a pariah, because we had Radovan Karadžić running around – sadly, he still is running around.

Q: And Mladić, too.

BEECROFT: Well, Mladić is probably in Belgrade, but he's certainly in the neighborhood. They put me up in the Sarajevo Holiday Inn, which had been built for the Olympics in '84. It was one of these horrible Yugoslav modern monstrosities, built of mustard-color panels, and of course it was full of bullet holes. Even at this point, several months after the shooting had stopped, you didn't want a room on the so-called Sniper Alley side of the building. The going rate for a room fluctuated, but it was usually about $250 cash per night, to stay in this building that had no working elevators, intermittent electricity, and no air conditioning -- and it was summer. The only way to get up to your room, and I was on the fifth floor, was to climb what had been the emergency staircase, which had been pounded to rubble, so you were holding the railing and inching yourself up and down this pile of fragmented concrete. It was quite an adventure. There was a row of overturned buses and old shipping containers that went from the side exit of the hotel to the corner of the nearest city block. This had provided cover while the shooting was still going on, and it was still the most direct way to get to the Embassy, several blocks away. After the Dayton Accords went into force at the end of '95, NATO came in in very heavy, 60,000

troops of whom 28,000 were Americans. NATO finally did what the UN had failed to do, and that was stop the shooting and begin to create the conditions necessary to create a state.

The Dayton Accords are still in force. The Bosnian Constitution is Annex Four of the Dayton Accords, drafted at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Dayton and in Washington by State Department lawyers. My job was to try to get the Croats, who are Catholics, and the Bosniaks, who are Muslims, to work together and make the Federation succeed. The Croats and the Bosniaks together constituted 51% of the territory and something like 60% of the population. There was a certain logic in the Bosniaks and Croats working together, but they had also been shooting at each during the war, so there was no love lost. I spent a lot of time talking with Alija Izetbegović, who was the great wartime hero of the Bosniaks, and with Krešimir Zubak, two of the three co-presidents under the Dayton constitution. Zubak who was a timid, lawyerly soul who kept his head down and didn't take risks. Izetbegović, by contrast, was a calculating politician and a very angry man, because of what had happened to his people, the Bosnian Muslims. From the outset, I did a lot of traveling around the country. I went down to Mostar a lot, because that's the heartland of the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I worked regularly with Carl Bildt, the former Swedish boy wonder prime minister who was the first High Representative under the Dayton Accords. The Office of the High Representative, or OHR, was established at Dayton as the international community overseer of the peace process. The governor general if you will. He's not a UN official -- the BBC still makes this mistake and calls him the UN High Representative. The UN, I can't overstress this, failed badly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nobody -- not the Serbs, not the Croats, not the Bosniaks -- has much good to say about the UN to this day.

Q: Well, while we're on it, let's talk a bit about the UN. What was the analysis? Was it, just UN apparatus or the people or what?

BEECROFT: It was largely the assumptions. I've already described the NATO end of this when we were talking about NATO. The UN was given the lead, and treated Bosnia as a Chapter Six operation. You have Chapter Six operations and, much more rarely, Chapter Seven. Chapter Six is peacekeeping. Chapter Seven is peacemaking. For reasons having to do with Russian opposition -- because of the Serb angle, European timidity and, I have to say, American disinterest -- this was made a Chapter Six operation by the Security Council. The fiction was maintained, between 1992 and the end of 1995, when the UN threw in the towel, that Bosnia was a "benign environment." Amazingly that's the terminology that was used. UN tanks were painted white. A number of nice young men and women from the Netherlands and Spain and Italy and France and Germany who found themselves chained to fences outside of weapon storage sites by Serb soldiers. Tanks turned around if an old woman decided to sit down in the middle of the road, which of course they did regularly. I a word, you had a kind of fecklessness, which is very well reflected in some of the movies that have been made about Bosnia since then, one in particular called No Man's Land that won a best foreign film Oscar several years ago. If you have a chance to see it, it's terrific. Eventually, it all came to a head at Srebrenica, and the Dutch totally lost it. That travesty, followed by the second shelling of the market in Sarajevo, convinced President Clinton to press NATO to intervene. It was the CNN factor that did it.

Q: Did you have the feeling that it was finally the United States saying enough is enough as

opposed to the rest of Europe saying enough is enough?

BEECROFT: Yes, it was the U.S. I have no doubt. I just don't think there was an end to the Europeans' fecklessness.

Q: This is something I think is very important as we talk about the problems of the United States today where we seem to have kind of lost our way, but you know, the phrase, the United States is an indispensable country keeps coming back as I look at this. So many actions would not have been taken, sometimes bad actions, but for the most part somebody saying enough is enough, knock it off fellows and stopping things.

BEECROFT: I think that's certainly what happened in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To this day, if there's one thing that Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs agree about, it's that they don't want the Americans to leave. SFOR is being phased out. It will be gone in another month. It's being replaced by a European force called EUFOR that will still have a kind of dotted-line relationship with NATO, but there will be no Americans in EUFOR. This is not bringing a lot of joy to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Q: Now, are the British at that time were they sort of seen as surrogates or not or were they part of the problem.

BEECROFT: They were seen as part of Europe. Remember, too, that the British had command of UNPROFOR, and the Bosnians took note. President Clinton, Secretary Christopher and Dick Holbrooke drove the international community, including the Russians, to agreement at Dayton. As a sop to the Europeans, the Dayton Accords were signed a month later in Paris, in December '95. The French still insist on calling them the Dayton-Paris Accords. That's what I found in the summer of '96 -- you had this very heavy NATO force. It was NATO-plus even then. It included Russians, Swedes…

Q: Moroccans?

BEECROFT: That's right.

Q: Ukrainians.

BEECROFT: Yes. In fact, I used to ride around in Ukrainian helicopters, and survived to tell about it. It was obviously a NATO operation, plus friends, and of course the friends loved it. They all got NATO training, and they got to use the PXs. For them, it was an eye-opener, because this was the first time that they had worked with NATO, and they liked it -- especially because the Americans were in charge. All the commanders of SFOR, and IFOR before it, were Americans from the get-go.

Q: In the first place you were an American representing America, I mean this was where did you fit?

BEECROFT: Yes. That was funny. My office was in the Chancery, which had been on the

ground for about a year at that point; before that, it had been "exiled" to Vienna. Until a few months before my arrival, most of the staff slept on the floor or behind their desks. There was a large sandbag-walled bomb shelter downstairs. My office was a broom closet, but at least it had a window. It was located between the Ambassador's office and the men's room – well, it was a person's room. It was a great way to get to know the staff; they all had to pass my desk on the way to the loo. The embassy building is an old house, sort of a Tito-modern Bauhaus style with no particular architectural merit, at the bottom of an orchard-covered hill. That always worried the RSO, because it would have been easy to lob grenades onto the roof.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

BEECROFT: A marvelous man named John Menzies. He was a USIA officer, the second U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first had been Vic Jackovich, who opened the embassy in Vienna in 1994. John replaced Vic. He retired from the Foreign Service after Sarajevo, and is now president of a small college in Iowa. He'd be an interesting person for you to talk with. John was a decent as they come. There was no question of competition between him and me. I made it clear from the start that I wasn't there to either look over his shoulder or second-guess him. I had a very narrow mandate and I was going to stick to it. I said "I've been a DCM twice, but you already have a DCM. I'll stay out of your way and do my job, and I'll keep you informed. If I can help you in anyway, just tell me." That's the way we worked it, and it worked fine. One of my first tasks was to work with Carl Bildt to arrange the first meeting of the three presidents of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Q: Now, Carl Bildt's position was what?

BEECROFT: He was the first High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina. OHR, the Office of the High Representative, was established under Annex 10 of the Dayton Accords. The High Representative reports to a sort of international community steering committee called the Peace Implementation Council or PIC -- not to NATO, not to the OSCE, certainly not to the United Nations. This group meets every three months or so, usually at the political director level. Its members are the U.S., Canada, Great Britain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Russia, Turkey -- which also represents the Organization of the Islamic Conference -- and Japan, which writes checks. Anyway, Carl Bildt was basically writing the script as he went. There was no job description for High Representative. Annex 10 of the Dayton Accords says, pretty much in so many words, the High Representative is the final authority in theater for everything he's responsible for. Really loose definition. The words "in theater" had been heavily fought over at Dayton. The PIC capitals were not about to relinquish final authority. Well, Bildt, as a former prime minister, knew very well that capitals weren't paying day-to-day attention to events on the ground as long as there was no immediate crisis. As time went on, the Office of the High Representative has acquired more and more authority. Bildt's successor, a Spaniard with the wonderful name of Carlos Westendorp, was granted the so- called the Bonn powers by the PIC. The Bonn Powers allow the High Representative to remove people from office for cause and to impose legislation. Every High Representative since Bildt has started out by saying he would use these powers sparingly, and ended up throwing lightening bolts all over the place. The Bonn Powers changed the paradigm. They're the way, in my view, to get your way in a post-conflict situation, and if you've got the muscle to prevail.

I worked with Bildt in two main areas. First of all, I ran something that the United States had started, called the Federation Forum. This was a way to get the two sides, the Croat and the Bosniak sides of the Federation to work better together. Once a month or so, I would chair these meetings with the support of the Deputy High Representative, Bildt's deputy, either in Sarajevo or in Mostar. We would talk through current issues and try to get the Federation authorities to begin to see themselves as part of a single enterprise. There would also be a representative there from what was then IFOR and later became SFOR. Under the Dayton Accords, under the constitution, there are three presidents. It's a co-presidency, collective presidency. But they had never met together. They all knew each other well, because they'd all been in the old Bosnia and Herzegovina parliament together under Tito. High Rep Bildt and I succeeded in bringing them together for a face-to-face meeting in the fall or '96. It was like pulling teeth. We got them to meet in a hotel called the Saraj, as in Sarajevo, overlooking the city. They finally agreed to meet, but only if the meeting wouldn't be seen as official. They just nickel-and-dime you to death, but they did meet and that broke the ice.

Q: Why weren't they meeting?

BEECROFT: They distrusted each other. They'd all been on opposite sides during the war. They all felt that they had a lot to answer for, and they were right. The Serb president, Krajišnik, has been convicted by the court in The Hague. The Croat president, Zubak, is still involved in politics, but his role and influence are minimal. Izetbegović died last year. Bosniaks consider him a martyr who saved them from extermination during the war. This meeting at the Hotel Saraj was incredible. They were all using the second singular form of the verb – the "tu" form. That's how well they knew each other. I remember once being up in Pale, a former ski resort town above Sarajevo, near where the men's and women's downhill races were held at the 1984 Olympics. I'm talking to Krajišnik, and I ask him, "How can you possibly do business with the other two members of the presidency if you never talk to them?" He says, "Never talk to them, eh? Watch this." He takes out his cell phone and dials: "Alija, how are you? How's the family? Haven't seen you in a long time." It went on like this for about 10 minutes. He was talking with Izetbegović; it was not a bluff. "Hope to see you soon, all the best, give my best to the wife. Bye bye." Then he looks at me and says, "See, I can talk to him any time I want."

Q: He just picked up a cell phone?

BEECROFT: Yes. I mean it was breathtaking.

Q: Well, in the first place when you got there how did you look at the different groups? Let's take the Bosniaks first. I have the impression that although they're called Muslims that they were very far from being Muslims in a way. I mean they had really nothing to do with what we would consider Muslims or Islamists today.

BEECROFT: Absolutely. They take great pains to make it clear to you that they are Europeans first and foremost. We're talking about South Slavs here; "Yugo" means "south." Whether they're Croat Serbs or Bosniaks, they're all South Slavs. That was one of the problems that arose when we began using DNA to identify body parts discovered in mass graves. There was a hope

that maybe we could identify them as Bosniaks, Croats or Serbs by their DNA. Forget it. What is different is their religion and their history, and the two are intimately linked. Many of the Bosniaks were city people when the Ottomans arrived in the 15th century. The Ottomans were not only clever, but realized that they didn't have the numbers to occupy all positions of responsibility. They said to the mayors or local authorities, "We would like you to stay in place and keep on doing what you're doing. Only one little thing: you must convert to Islam. If you don't convert, you're welcome to stay on, but you will find that your taxes will rise and life won't be as comfortable. Needless to say, many of the elite converted. You're absolutely right; before 1991, it was really Islam light. In fact, it was two degrees removed from what we would call the Islam of Mecca. First it was Turkish Islam, not Arabic Islam. Second, these were Europeans. A lot of them did not go to the mosque regularly. There was a lot of intermarriage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and nobody seemed to care very much. So when I hear these clichés about hundreds of years of enmity, it's just not so. The Bosniaks always say "We're the most European of any of them."

They also see themselves as being the aggrieved party. And it's true that they suffered the most. The current High Representative, Lord Ashdown, in his autobiography, describes a dinner in 1995 where he sat next to Franjo Tudjman, the president of Croatia. Tudjman was drunk. Ashdown asked him, "Is it true, Mr. President, that you and Milošević agreed on how to partition Bosnia and Herzegovina?" Tudjman said, "Yes, and I'll show you how." So he draws this map of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is basically triangular shape, with a sort of yin and yang S curve across it and Sarajevo right on the line. Then Tudjman says to Ashdown, "Everything to the west was going to go to me and everything to the east was going to go to Milošević." Ashdown asked, "What about Sarajevo?" He said, "Well, our plan was to divide that and build a wall." Now, the Berlin Wall had fallen only seven years earlier. The consequence here would have been to build a new wall and create a Muslim ghetto in Sarajevo, which obviously would have been the prelude to either expulsion or something worse. This, after all, is the war where the horrible term of "ethnic cleansing" was born. There's nothing clean about ethnic cleansing.

Q: How did you view the Croats at this time?

BEECROFT: At that time and in one word, as whiners. They are the smallest of Bosnian's three constituent peoples – no more than 15%. Theoretically, I think the Croats have the best potential to move away from the horror of the war and toward Europe. It's important to make a distinction between Croats and Croatians, just as one makes a distinction in the region between Serbs and Serbians. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, you have Croats. They are citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, not citizens of Croatia, although a heck of a lot of them carry two passports. Likewise, Serbians are citizens of Serbia, but there are lots of Serbs in Bosnia. The Bosnian Croats are in something of a privileged situation. First of all, as I said, a lot of them have two passports, both Bosnian and Croatian. Second of all, they have a huge and prosperous mafia, so there was a lot of money pouring in, including during the war. Third, the influence of the Catholic Church is huge -- and I'm talking about very hardline elements of the Catholic Church, especially in Herzegovina down near the Croatian border. One of the difficult situations that we internationals all faced was how to deal with the Bishop of Mostar, Branko Perić, who is close to being a fascist. I went to the Vatican twice and met with the Foreign Minister of the Holy See to discuss this problem. You have -- and this is true of all three ethnic groups -- a kind of an unholy

alliance between ethnic political parties, ethnic mafias and religious organizations. These people have an investment in not seeking reconciliation. That's why it has taken so long to get where we are now in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because they've got a lot invested in not reconciling with the other groups.

Q: Well, then what were we able while you were there from '76 to when?

BEECROFT: I was there from '96.

Q: I mean '96.

BEECROFT: Just about a year the first time, August '96 to August '97, and then I went back in 2001.

Q: Okay. During '96 to '97, could you see progress?

BEECROFT: I guess the short answer is not nearly as much as we would have liked, because nobody understood at the outset what a tough nut this was going to be. Bosnia and Herzegovina, geographically and historically -- along with Kosovo for different reasons -- is kind of a linchpin of the Balkans. If things succeed in Bosnia, they can succeed anywhere in the region. If things fail in Bosnia, the region will know it and there will be repercussions. Why? Because you have these overlaps across the borders. Serbia is mainly made up of Serbs, but not only. Croatia is mainly Croats, especially since the war, but not only. Bosnia is all of the above. It's Croats, it's Serbs, it's Muslims. It's also Jews, Roma, Romanians, Hungarians, Ukrainians, and Italians, who were brought in by the Austro-Hungarians. It's a real hodgepodge. It's also geographically very difficult. I like to say it's West Virginia with much higher mountains. So you also have this fragmentation and separation caused by geography -- deep valleys, little villages, occasional big towns, a couple of major cities. The entire population in 1991 was only four million, and with the war it's now probably about two thirds of that. There were two million refugees and IDPs out of four million people, of whom one million have come back to settle their property claims. Many of them have stayed on, but Bosnia and Herzegovina lost one quarter of the population at least.

Q: Where did you find sort of the most cooperation and the least cooperation?

BEECROFT: Very hard to predict. The Bosniaks were the cleverest in at least appearing to cooperate. The Serbs were in a "not only no, but hell no" mode for the most part, with one exception and I'll come back to that. The Croats were still angling for ways to get out of the bargain completely and become part of Croatia, which was not going to happen, but you had the HDZ, the Croatian Democratic Party, which is anything but democratic, and was closely aligned with the Croat mafia and the church in pushing for separation, on the grounds that because the Croat population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the smallest of the three main groups, it was going to be squeezed out by the other two. The Bosniak population was about 45% of the total, the Serbs about 30% and the Croats about 15%. As I said, the Bosniaks would talk a good line, but remember that after the fighting stopped there were still a number of former and maybe some active Mujadheddin in Bosnia and Herzegovina who had come in during the war. So, when you asked me before about Islam in the country, there was this second group, who were not Bosniaks

but Arabs, maybe as many as 1,500 or 2,000, some of whom had married local women and had settled into mountain villages. They were basically being protected by Izetbegović and the people around him in the SDA, the Bosniak hardline party. On instructions from Washington, I called on Izetbegović repeatedly to request that he expel these people. He always deflected the matter, and would tell me quite bluntly that he felt he had a blood debt to them, because they had helped protect and preserve Bosnia during the war.

Q: These were Islamists from other, from Islamic countries who had come to fight for the Bosniak cause?

BEECROFT: Yes. Correct. They were Moroccans, Jordanians, Egyptians, Algerians -- the list was fairly long and some of them had fought in Afghanistan, so they were no slouches. That began to worry the U.S. Government and we put a lot of pressure on Izetbegović, especially after Khobar Towers and the like. Obviously after 9/11, the interest grew exponentially. By that time, though, Izetbegović was no longer in day-to-day control, and many Mujaheddin had been expelled. There are probably fewer than 100 left in Bosnia and Herzegovina today and they are carefully watched.

Q: What about I mean what was Bildt doing? Did he have control of the troops or who?

BEECROFT: No. Bildt had a staff of maybe 40 or 50 people internationals and some locals. He had a small group of mainly Swedish Foreign Ministry people around him, but he didn't have control of anything, including funds. He was defining his job as he went along, and given the fact that he didn't have the Bonn powers, that was a pretty good trick. He did quite well, all things considered. IFOR/SFOR was commanded at that time by a three-star American general, later reduced to two stars, now one star. The current one is the last. After him, SFOR command will be turned over to the European Union. One of the things we defined along the way was where the powers of the High Representative stopped and the powers of the NATO commander started. Bildt's job was to try to give life to the constitutional structure agreed at Dayton. COMIFOR's job was to, and this is a quote, "maintain a safe and secure environment." That was the mission of IFOR/SFOR. In other words, to give Bildt and his successors an environment in which they could build a functioning state. As time went on -- and it took a couple of years -- there began to be more and more understanding of where these lines were. It was all defined on the fly, but on the basis of Dayton.

Then you had another player. Here's another area where the UN actually did some good. They created an international police task force, IPTF, bringing in police from the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and also bringing in people like Italian Carabinieri, armed paramilitary police who bridged the gap between what SFOR did and what Bildt was doing. Meanwhile, as the biggest kid on the block, our Embassy was very active in keeping tabs on all this reporting back to Washington. In November of '96, John Menzies left Sarajevo. From that time until when I left in August 1997, I wore two hats. I was both Head of Mission and Special Envoy. My wife was in Washington the whole time.

Q: Well, I mean were you when you say head of mission, does this mean chief of mission?

BEECROFT: Yes. I had a DCM, for example.

Q: So, you were the ambassador?

BEECROFT: I was never confirmed. Remember, this was the beginning of Clinton's second term, so there were the usual political maneuverings going on. EUR supported me for the ambassadorship, but higher levels had another candidate. So it goes.

Q: While you were there there were zones where different militaries of war came to stay.

BEECROFT: Correct.

Q: What about this inability to get a hold of what's his name Karadžić and all, I mean during the time you were there.

BEECROFT: Yes, we knew where Karadžić was. It was one of the great lost opportunities. I mentioned this town of Pale, which was basically a resort community 25 minutes up the road from Sarajevo proper, in a high mountain valley. Karadžić had an office there, in a factory that had been used to assemble Mercedes trucks called the Famos factory. You mentioned the fact that there were different military districts. Unlike Sarajevo, which was commanded by a U.S. General, Pale was in the area of responsibility of the French, the Spanish and the Italians. They sent patrols through Pale on a regular basis. We knew his car, though -- it was a Mercedes with tinted windows. We knew where his family lived and we knew where his office was. The French and the Italians never moved to pick him up.

Q: How did we analyze this? What was the motivation of lack of enterprise in this matter?

BEECROFT: I can only tell you what the speculation was -- that they were taking orders from their capitals on this matter, not from NATO in Brussels. I think that's true. For reasons having to do with not wanting to get any of their soldiers killed, and maybe other more political reasons as well, they gave him a pass.

Q: Was this a matter of concern, annoyance, anger?

BEECROFT: It was a matter of great annoyance and anger in Washington, but there was little we could do about it at the Embassy. I don't doubt that Washington was applying pressure in the capitals concerned, but nothing ever happened on the ground. Here's a quick anecdote. The president of Republika Srpska, a woman named Biljana Plavšić, is now in a minimum security prison in Sweden. She was one tough, smart lady -- a former professor in Sarajevo, and certainly no angel. During the war, one of her bodyguards was Arkan, who was one of the most vicious Serb terrorists. One day, she asked me to come up and talk to her. So I went up the hill to Pale in our armored van, and we pull into the parking lot of the Famos factory, where she had her office, and we see his car there. Of course I was under strict instructions to steer clear of this guy. This was not a matter for civilians to deal with. So I said to my RS protocol escort, "Of course you understand that there are circumstances under which I cannot enter that building." She's thinking, you could see the wheels turning. Then she says, "Oh, just a minute please." She goes

into the building and comes out five minutes later with a big smile on her face, and says, "I can assure you there is no one in that building whom you would not wish to meet" They'd chased him out the back door. Meanwhile I was asking myself, what if I meet him in the men's room?

Q: I'm making a citizen's arrest.

BEECROFT: That's right. I mean, it really isn't a laughing matter, it's tragicomic.

Q: It really is. Well, while you were there were you seeing the beginnings of what you might call reconciliation or getting used to each other, particularly the kids, the younger people and all?

BEECROFT: No.

Q: I mean were the churches and everybody still pounding the drums?

BEECROFT: No, there was very little active propagandizing in that sense. We at the Embassy were beginning to work with the Council of Europe and NGO's like the Center for Civic Education, which were trying to build a viable education system. There were three different systems, and the textbooks in each were calling the other two peoples inferior human beings, that kind of thing. We also worked hard to establish an Inter-Religious Council, consisting of the senior religious leaders of the Islamic, the Orthodox, Serb, Croat and the Jewish faiths – the Raïs ul-Ulema, the Vladika, the Cardinal and the head of the Jewish community. In the summer of '97, we finally succeeded in getting the four of them to meet together. I remember thinking, What a bunch of old farts. There was no warmth at all. They deigned to be in the same room but there was very little spirit of compromise. With the exception of the Mufti, who is a very clever man, and the head of the Jewish community, whom I greatly respect, one felt very little in terms of reconciliation in the air that day.

Incidentally, the Jewish community plays a very special role in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They arrived after the expulsion from Spain in 1492. Some of them still speak some Ladino, the Romance equivalent of Yiddish in the Iberian peninsula. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the found themselves in a place where there's always been a certain amount of polarization, so they took on a unique role as middlemen. Whenever you wanted anything done that could be ethnically difficult, you'd enlist the services of a member of the Jewish community. The head of the Sarajevo Jewish community is Jacob Finzi, a delightful man with relatives in Chicago. He currently the leads the Civil Service Commission, because that's is where the plum jobs get handed out and the three main ethnic groups concurred that they couldn't entrust it to one of their own. This is quite typical.

Anyway, reconciliation was definitely not in the air. Remember, that the first post-war election was held in September 1996, only a half year really after the shooting stopped. They were organized by the OSCE Mission, which then proceeded to oversee six elections in six years. The 1996 elections were pronounced free and fair, but the Bosnian patient nearly died. Why? Because the rule of law wasn't in place. People need to have confidence in the future if they're to vote for change. But daily life was still too uncertain in September 1996. Unless people have confidence in the rule of law – democratic, responsive police, a fair and efficient court system,

functioning prisons – they will circle the wagons and vote for the hardliners. That's what they did. Too bad no one checked with us about this before going into Iraq.

Q: What about corruption? I recall some headlines about money going to the government in Bosnia and corrupt as all hell.

BEECROFT: Yes, it's still true. The international community been applying considerable pressure to deal with corruption. At the OSCE Mission, we had our own team of a half dozen auditors. They focused on publicly owned corporations such as the electric companies, which in many cases are socialist relics. Corruption is built into the system. It's very Mediterranean in that sense. The attitude is this: if you work for a public company, or for the government, you're entitled to skim some cream off the top. The war just made matters worse. There is political corruption, but the whole economy is also based on corruption. People claimed there were no jobs. The fact is that there were, but they belonged to the gray economy. It wasn't full employment, but it wasn't 40% or 50% unemployment either. P people were working for somebody's brother or nephew or somebody in the family, and they weren't paying taxes. Have you ever heard of Arizona Market?

Q: Yes, but you might explain what it is.

BEECROFT: Okay. Brčko is a river port city across the Sava River from Croatia, way up north. The highway that leads south out of Brčko toward Tuzla was named Arizona Highway by SFOR. In 1996, south of Brčko, right on the boundary line between the two entities, an ad hoc market sprang up. It looked for all the world like a souk, a Middle Eastern bazaar. The three ethnic mafias cleaned out a minefield and installed wooden walkways and lean-to shacks. It was something you'd expect to see outside of Istanbul. You could buy anything at Arizona Market. You could buy a television. You could buy a nice young lady from Moldova. You could buy a Mercedes stolen off the streets of Berlin yesterday -- name your color. It was all there. Everybody profited. These guys all knew each other, all understood each other and they cut the pie very efficiently.

Q: It shows there is such a thing as real cooperation.

BEECROFT: You bet, as long as it's in everybody's interests.

Q: Did you get involved in the when you were there, at one point I think everybody depending on which entity you were in you had license plates of that entity.

BEECROFT: Not entity – ethnicity.

Q: Were you there when they switched the license plates? Explain what the problem was.

BEECROFT: During and immediately after the war, the Bosniak, Croat and Serb authorities each issued their own license plates. Naturally, this discouraged people from leaving their own territories, because they were so easily identifiable. I have a Serb license plate at home. Someone gave it to me when I left in '04. It has SS on it -- it looks like CC because it's in Cyrillic -- which

stood for “Serb Sarajevo.” There was also a Bosniak license plate whose emblem was a fleur de lys, because that was the Bosniak symbol. And you had a Croat license plate, which featured a red and white checkerboard, the Croat symbol. Of course, these competing license plates carried ethnic and religious connotations. You didn’t want to drive into the “wrong” territory, depending on the license plate you had. Very early on, we began to push for a single license plate and a single currency, because you also had three currencies. The politicians’ interest was in exploiting and reinforcing everything possible to add to their power base, which meant exaggerating all differences. The high representative’s office, Carl Bildt, began coming up with designs for license plates and designs for currency. Oh, and by the way, designs for a Bosnia and Herzegovina flag.

Q: Oh God.

BEECROFT: There was no state-level flag. There was a Republic of Srpska flag with a Serb crest on it and the slogan “SSSS” –in Cyrillic, CCCC—which is an abbreviation for “only unity saves the Serbs.” There was no Federation flag, because the Croats and the Bosniaks couldn’t agree on one. One of the first breakthroughs we achieved in the so-called Federation Forum was agreement on a Federation flag -- red vertical line down one side, green vertical side down the other side, a shield in the middle with the EU stars at the bottom, to show that the Federation is be part of Europe, and at the top of the crest a Bosniak fleur de lys alongside a Croat checkerboard.

But at this point, 1996-’97, there was still no flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, we were pressing for a single license plate and a single currency. This is not easy, because you are dealing with symbols, and if there is one thing that matters in the Balkans, it’s symbolism. I have at a sample banknote at home that Krajišnik tabled one day at a presidents ‘meeting; the Serbs had had it printed in Paris. It’s high-quality work, really nice. It features a really nice picture of a Serbian Orthodox monastery. At this president’s meeting, Izetbegović, the Bosniak president, looks over and says, “I know that monastery. Isn’t it in Serbia?” Krajišnik, looking a bit like the kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar, replies, “Yes, but that shouldn’t make any difference since it’s a monastery, not a public building.” So Izetbegović gets a little smile on his face and says, “We don’t care what’s on the bills, as long as it’s noncontroversial. I’d be perfectly happy with trees and birds and flowers.” Eventually, the three sides agreed on a series of faces of academics and other non-political figures.

As for the license plates, Bildt and the British Ambassador, Charles Crawford, devised a totally anodyne plate consisting of three numbers, one letter and three numbers, with no national markings at all. His idea was that that would build confidence that anyone could drive anywhere without being identified as a Bosniak, Croat or Serb. He took it up to Pale and showed it to Krajišnik, who shakes his head and says, “Oh, this is unacceptable. You’re going to be using letters that do not exist in the Cyrillic alphabet.” So Bildt announces: “Mr. President, I have good news for you. We have chosen only the 12 letters that are common between the Latin and Cyrillic alphabets.” According to Crawford, Krajišnik flushed bright red and said, “We will still never accept it.” That was the kind of psychological trench warfare that was being waged. The symbols were used as tools to emphasize small differences and keep political control.

The same thing with the flag of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The flag was invented out of whole cloth – sorry – by Carl Bildt and his team. It consists of a blue field to suggest Europe, on which is a white triangle in the general shape of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a line of stars which have no particular significance.. It looks like something you could pull out of a cereal box.

Q: It really is an abomination.

BEECROFT: As I said, it was just something that OHR came up with. Bildt actually had a half dozen designs he was considering, This one was anodyne enough so that the Bosnians eventually accepted it. But if you go to Banja Luka, the seat of government of the Republika Srpska, today you will be hard pressed to find a Bosnian flag. There are plenty of RS flags on display, though. They have put the Bosnian flag in the RS parliament chamber, though, along with the RS flag. That surprised a lot of people, including me.

Q: Did you have problems with corruption creeping into the American presence there, the military and civilian?

BEECROFT: Virtually none. I'm deeply proud of what the United States has done there over the years, in terms of the level and seriousness of the commitment -- SFOR troops, staffers at OHR and OSCE, police in the International Police Task Force, people in various NGO's…I don't think we could have asked for more.

Q: How did you fine, not just American, but the NGO community, non-government organization community. What was their contribution and what was your impression of their work?

BEECROFT: They were especially active in five areas: health; humanitarian demining; housing rehabilitation; refugee return, which is related; and education. Bosnia and Herzegovina, after all, had been a constituent republic of Yugoslavia, with a very good standard of health care, excellent hospitals in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Banja Luka, Gorazde, other cities. During the war, a lot of dedicated doctors, Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs, others stayed on, and many died. A lot of NGOs were active, such as CARE, who came in and helped to re-start the hospital system. Then there was humanitarian demining. Estimates for land mines still in the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina today vary between 500,000 and a million. The various militaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina had planted some of the minefields, so there were some records as to where some of them were, but others had been planted by peasant farmers who managed to get access to weapons storage sites. They wanted to discourage people from taking over their farms if they were forced off the land. So you had these random land mines scattered here and there. Today, animals, and sometimes children or adults, are still being killed by these incidental mines. No one had the money or the resources necessary to take all these mines out of the ground -- either the random mines or the minefields that had been planted by the military along the confrontation line. A number of NGOs with expertise in demining came in and began getting to work, training locals to do it. Some war veterans who were looking for work anyway were hired on. It was a drop in the bucket, but it was a start. As for refugees, Save the Children, Red Cross, Red Crescent, UNHCR, lots of organizations focused on refugee issues. UNHCR is not an NGO, but they helped launch and organize the process. This ties directly to reconstruction, facilitating the return of people who want to come back and finding places for them to live. The U.S. Embassy

in the early days, OSCE later on, really got involved along with UNHCR in creating circumstances for return. This has been one of the good news stories in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will never be what it was before, but the advocates of "ethnic cleansing" never fully accomplished their mission either.

Q: You know, I was in is it Derventa.

BEECROFT: Derventa. When were you there?

Q: '94, I think it was the third election.

BEECROFT: Oh my God. So you saw it when it was really in bad shape.

Q: Yes. People would point out houses. These were Muslim houses essentially that had been blown up.

BEECROFT: Yes.

Q: Were you able to I mean were they getting Muslims back into places like that?

BEECROFT: Not a whole lot in Derventa, because Derventa is still terribly poor. A lot of it has to do with lack of jobs. People need to be able to come back and do something. The eastern part of Republika Srpska, along the Drina, had been overwhelmingly Muslim. That is, after all, where Srebrenica is. The region was viciously "cleansed" of Muslims by the Serbs. If you go back today to places like Foća or Višegrad, the Muslims have come back in large numbers. Foća is a town right on the border with Montenegro, not too far from where Karadžić reputedly is holed up. The Mayor of Foća, a Serb, deserves a lot of credit. Mosques have been rebuilt. Muslims have come back. In the spring of '04, I was at a town called Janja, near Bijeljina, to visit a school there. Before the war, Janja had been 48% Muslim and 52% Serb. By 1998, it was 99% Serb. Now many Muslims have returned, and the school was a wonder. Here were people of both nationalities on the ground, faculty, parents and students, and they were working together very smoothly. They had developed a curriculum that both be comfortable with. The lesson is if there's some sense of law and order, and if there is some sense of comfort with each other, you can begin the reconciliation process on your own.

Q: It sounds like in a way the reconciliation really does come down to on the ground rather than in the capital where the political leaders are still mouthing the same old crap.

BEECROFT: Absolutely right. There are bright lights all over Bosnia and Herzegovina and that to me is the great hope.

Q: What about Brčko is that a problem for you when you were there?

BEECROFT: In '96 and '97 it was awful. Brčko, a river port and market town up on the Sava River, was viciously ethnically cleansed of Bosniaks in 1992-3. Terrible things were done in those days. This was in the very first days of "ethnic cleansing." At Dayton, Brčko was so

sensitive, both geographically and socially, that when the accords were agreed in November of ’95, they couldn’t agree on Brčko -- the reason being that it’s located right at the narrowest place in the saddlebags that are the Republika Srpska. Brčko is at the top of the saddle. So, the RS was not about to give it up for strategic reasons, even though it had been mainly Bosniak. On the other hand, the Federation wanted it because it was also where the north-south lines of communication go; rail and road bridges cross the Sava into Croatia and then on to Hungary. Both entities wanted it but neither could have it. After three years of prolonged negotiations, the Brčko District was established in 1998 under the authority of the High Representative -- like the District of Columbia, except it isn’t the capital. Ever since, there have been Brčko Administrators, always Americans, who report directly to the High Rep. Ten years ago, it was a shambles, surrounded by minefields. It was largely rubble. Mosques and churches in the town had been flattened. There was no economy. The bridge across the Sava River to Croatia had been blown. There were no hotels; you couldn’t stay there. We put in a series of senior FSOs as the Brčko Administrators.

Q: I interviewed one.

BEECROFT: Bill Farrand, probably.

Q: Bill Farrand, yes.

BEECROFT: Yes, Bill was the first. I can’t tell you as much as he can, but he was magnificent, and so were his successors. They used their powers as the Deputy to the High Representative to reform the political and economic structure of Brčko. They turned the town into a laboratory. It was the first town in Bosnia and Herzegovina where the schools were integrated forcibly. It was the first place where they held elections that were really elections, where the old hardline parties didn’t just buy the process or try to dominate it. They created an effective police force. Right at the edge of town was a major SFOR base, Camp McGovern, built right on the inter-entity boundary line. U.S. and NATO troops kept a close watch. Over time, Brčko, because of its strategic location and thanks to the process of putting enlightened local citizens in charge, has become a very most prosperous town, second only to Sarajevo. It irritates both the RS and the Federation, because Brčko is making money hand over the fist. Taxes are lower, import duties are lower, and neither entity can put its hand in the pot. They both covet it and they can’t have it. Brčko has turned from a disaster into a success story.

Q: How about Mostar when you were the first time?

BEECROFT: Actually, the first time was as a tourist in 1974, with my wife Mette and then six-year-old son Christopher. To come back and see what had happened to it was shocking. There’s a grand avenue, called the Bulevar, that parallels the river on the west side of town. The buildings along it looked like Swiss cheese. You had the Croats on the west side of the street and the Bosniaks on the east side, firing at point blank range for the better part of three years, every caliber of weapon. It looked like pictures of Stalingrad in 1943. The bridge of course was gone, the famous Turkish bridge over the river. The shelling had been such that even when you were a few blocks away from the boulevard, the buildings were pretty badly beaten up. No one was talking to anybody. You would go to east Mostar, the Muslim side of town, and you’d talk to the

Bosniak mayor. Then you'd go to west Mostar and you'd talk to the Croat mayor. You had, in effect, two estranged halves of a single city. Mostar has recovered from that only very slowly. No one could solve it quickly. The international community threw a series of special envoys at Mostar, and they've all come a-cropper. One of them, the former mayor of Bremen, Hans Koschnick came close to being ridden out of town on a rail. As he left town in his car – fled would be the better word -- he was pelted with bricks and rocks. Finally, Paddy Ashdown last year threw in the gauntlet and said "I've had enough." He imposed a solution on Mostar. At the end of the war, what you had was a central district, which was a political no man's land. Then you had three Bosniak communities on the east side of the Neretva River and three Croat communities on the west side. There were two universities, two police forces, two mafias, two religious organizations -- the Islamic community on the east side and the Catholic community on the west side, which was in turn divided between Franciscans and non-Franciscans. A lot of competition there, in a very small place.

Q: I know in World War II the Franciscans were as close to being a fascist organization as you can have. I mean the little brothers of St. Francis were taking Serbs, putting them in churches and setting them on fire.

BEECROFT: Yes. Well, they haven't changed much in Mostar. There are really two completely separate Franciscan organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. If you go to middle Bosnia, high up in the mountains, the Franciscans are great. I've stayed at monasteries. The warm welcome you get, the genuine hospitality is fantastic. But those Franciscans aren't on speaking terms with the Franciscans down in Herzegovina. They literally don't talk to each other. The Franciscans of Mostar are making a mint out of pilgrimages to the shrine of Medjugorje, which the Vatican has never recognized.

Q: Were the pilgrims going in all the time when you were there?

BEECROFT: Oh, absolutely, all during the war and they still do. I have met people from the United States and Canada who have never been to Europe other than to go to Medjugorje

Q: Well, such is faith I guess.

BEECROFT: If you love kitsch, Medjugorje is the place to go. Other than in Jerusalem, I've never seen such horrible stuff, but it's a great moneymaker. Anyway, Mostar is only very slowly coming back. The bridge is back in its glory, although it looks too clean. It will take time to get dirty again. There is now one political structure for the entire city, but it's more appearance than reality. One thing that I find encouraging is that non-Bosniaks, non-Croats are coming back to Mostar. Several thousand Serbs have returned. That's good. I've been to the ruins of the Serb Orthodox cathedral, was also flattened. That's what needs to be done -- mix it up. Don't let things get polarized again.

Q: Did you sort of in the late night hours sit around, like why was Mostar so bad? Was anybody able to?

BEECROFT: We know what happened. Why it happened is harder to explain. What happened in

the early days of the war was that the Serbs attacked Mostar from the east from the areas that they occupied around Trebinje in the eastern RS. The Bosniaks and Croats united to repel them successfully. This was 1993. Very soon after their victory over the Serbs, the Bosniak and Croat troops turned their guns on each other, starting in the barracks along the Neretva where they had been stationed, they turned their guns on each other. No one is sure why, but I've always suspected that it was on orders from Tudjman.

Q: One last question, what about the area whose name escapes me now, but where the Croats drove the Serbs out up near.

BEECROFT: Krajina.

Q: Krajina, what was happening up there?

BEECROFT: Krajina is in Croatia, but we got involved with it in my second incarnation in Bosnia, because we were trying to get the Krajina Serbs, who were now refugees in the Republika Srpska, to go back.

Q: Well, we'll pick that up the next time.

BEECROFT: Okay.

Q: So, we'll pick this up, you left in '97 and where did you go?

BEECROFT: August '97 and I went to the Senior Seminar.

Q: Okay and we'll pick it up at that point.

BEECROFT: Okay.

Q: Today is the 1st of December, 2004. Bob, looking at a picture of the Pope here. I don't think you mentioned the Pope's visit. How did that go and what was that about?

BEECROFT: The Pope came to Sarajevo in April 1997. It was tied to the efforts to begin the reconciliation process, because so much of what had gone wrong in Bosnia and Herzegovina was colored by religion. The Pope had been very active during the war in trying to stop the fighting, trying to foster reconciliation . So he came to Sarajevo, a year and four months after the fighting stopped. He had made a promise to do so, and he wanted to keep it. So he flew to Sarajevo -- interesting that he didn't go to Mostar; in fact, he has never gone to Mostar. He came again in 2002 and he went to Banja Luka, the seat of the RS government. He understood that in Bosnia, not all the minefields are in the ground. Anyway, it was a very cold April morning, with snow squalls. Rumors were circulating that a bomb was planted under a bridge on the route that he was taking in from the airport – the former Sniper Alley. SFOR troops were all over the place. Buses came from all over the country, the first time anyone had seen something like that since the fighting stopped. Catholics came in large numbers, of course, but a lot of Muslims as well. There were fewer Serbs, but some were present too. The Sarajevo soccer stadium was full, 60,000

people. The Pope talked of reconciliation and got enormous cheers. It was really cold, and we wondered about his health, but he was tough. I have to stress: this was not just a Catholic rally. It was a message to all Bosnians, and they welcomed it.

Just like the political leaders, the religious leaders were hardly on speaking terms at the end of the war. It took another few months, but in July or August of 1997, we got Cardinal Puljić; the Grand Mufti, Mustafa Čerić -- a very smart man, former head of the Islamic community in Chicago--; the Serb Orthodox Vladika, Vasilije Kačavenda; and the head of the Jewish community, Jacob Finzi, together in one room at the Hotel Bosna. It was the first time that had happened since the fighting started. What you see there with the Pope….

Q: We're looking at a picture here.

BEECROFT: That was the impetus that led to the establishment of the inter-religious council. I have to tell you, it's been a bumpy road ever since. They're still very suspicious of each other. It's not just theology. In fact I'd say theology is the least of it. It has to do with things like property claims, relative power and influence. The Vladika, for example, never stops talking about the property that was seized from the Orthodox Church by Tito at the end of World War II, and which they're still trying to get back. It's hard to locate the deeds. It's social, it's historic, everyone has a grief to tell you about. Everyone's a victim. Everyone claims to be a victim.

Q: This is when you get to the Balkans. This is the name of the game. They've been brought up to be victims.

BEECROFT: Yes and they will do whatever they can to get you to buy into their psychology of being the victim, which means everybody else is the exploiter. As an outsider, you have to make it very clear very early on that you're not going to play that game. The only way I found to do that is to say yes, we realize you all had a difficult past, but let's talk about the future. That's when you get the blank looks.

Q: Yes, well, now, speaking of the Pope was either on your part or anybody else's part, was there a saying say do something about the fascist bishop of Mostar or take the little brothers of St. Francis and get them out of. I mean they are practically an offshoot of the old Ustashi who were the fascist police of the Croatia republic during the Hitler time.

BEECROFT: Correct. The bishop of Mostar was quoted on the radio within the past year -- although he has made it very hard to get a copy of the transcript -- saying that things weren't all that bad under the Ustashi Fascist Croat Republic.

Q: If you were Catholic things were pretty damn good.

BEECROFT: They were indeed.

Q: _____ and all.

BEECROFT: That's right.

Q: Anyway, but I mean, was there any attempt to get the Pope to put a reign on these forces or not?

BEECROFT: Well, I went to the Vatican twice. I went in '02 and I went again this past March in '04. I met each time with the Foreign Minister of the Holy See. It was clear to me that they know they have a problem but they're unsure how to deal with it. They point out that these hardliners are very careful to stay on the right side of the line theologically, so it's hard to lay a hand on them. Frankly I think that they feel that they have bigger fish to fry, and bigger problems in places like Boston or some parts of Latin America.

Q: Sure and also as I know having served in Belgrade, the virulent Croat Catholics are very strong particularly in Chicago, but also in Cleveland and sort of the Midwest cities.

BEECROFT: The Croat Diaspora is the strongest of the three. The Bosniak diaspora is not well organized. You find Bosniaks in the United States, in Canada, all over Western Europe, but in today's atmosphere many don't like to advertise that they're Muslims. The Serbs are in a category all their own, passive-aggressive, with an enormous collective chip on their shoulders. All three approach the issues differently. I don't want to overplay the Croat part, it's just that the Croats, as the smallest of the three constituent peoples, are the most vocal about the situation they found themselves in at the end of the war. It's another reason why one of the issues that I advocated was the need for a new census. The Croats didn't like at all, because they'd lost the greatest share of population. There hasn't been a census in Bosnia Herzegovina since 1991. That means that the Dayton Accords, and everything that has followed from them, are based on a fiction, because the population today doesn't look like it did in 1991. It's smaller and it's distributed differently, and that's not going to change a whole lot. It seems to me that you can't really talk about the future of Bosnia until you know who's where and in what numbers. That's why a census is so necessary.

ROBERT WILLIAM FARRAND
International Administrator
Brčko, Bosnia (1997-2000)

Robert William Farrand was born in Watertown, NY in 1934. He attended Mt. Saint Mary's College and after graduation served in the US Navy for seven years. He then joined the Foreign Service in 1964. During his service he has worked in Kuala Lumpur, Moscow, Prague, Brčko, and served as Ambassador to Papua New Guinea. Along with his posts abroad he has had numerous responsibilities within the Department of State. Mr. Farrand was interviewed in March, 2001 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Well, after the inspection, I'm just looking at the time here, after the inspection what did you do?

FARRAND: I had inspected oh, I don't know, maybe eight or nine or ten overseas posts and maybe three bureaus in the Department of State, when I received a telephone call. I was in Saudi Arabia already about two weeks into an inspection there, just after, not just after, but shortly after the bombing at Dhahran of the Khobar Towers and I received a telephone call from Washington asking me to go to Bosnia and take on a job in a contested city in the northeastern part of the country to take on, in fact to take on the city, to run the city.

Q: What city is this?

FARRAND: It's a vowel-challenged city, a little city of about 80,000 people, a vowel challenge. It's Brcko.

Q: Today is December 11, 2001. Bill, you were in Bosnia from 1997 to when?

FARRAND: The 3lst of May, 2000.

Q: Well, tell me how the assignment came about.

FARRAND: I was on an inspection team and we had landed a couple of weeks earlier, or ten days maybe in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and we were setting up to inspect the embassy in Riyadh, the consulate in Jeddah and in Dhahran in the aftermath, well, it was probably a year after the bombing that had taken place in Dhahran at the Khobar Towers. I was sitting one evening watching a film and I got a tap on my shoulder, it was the marine guard saying that Washington wanted to speak to me right way. I got on the line with Washington, I guess it was close to midnight in Riyadh so I guess that would have made it about 6:00 in Washington or maybe 5:00 and it was Bill Montgomery, who was an old acquaintance. He said, he was calling from the European Bureau and he said, "We'd like you to go and take on a big assignment, a big one in Bosnia." I said, "What's it about?" He told me and I said, "Give me overnight to think about it." I told him that I was in a middle of starting off on a very serious inspection in an important country that we had spent several months getting ready to be there because that's how it works. He said, "That's not important, don't worry about that. Just tell me whether you'll do it or you won't. We want you to go to a town called Brcko." Sure, it's vowel challenged, I'll repeat that, it's vowel challenged. Brcko. So many people say Berko or Brickle or something of that nature, but in linguistics, the 'r' is rolled, so a rolled r becomes a vowel. The 'c' has a little hat on it so it's Brcko. You can say it like a birch tree, with a 'ko' on the end, Brcko, but you put the emphasis on the first. Anyway, what I did, it had then the major sticking point at the Dayton Peace Talks out in Bright Patterson Air Force Base in November, December of '95 that it was the one issue that could not be resolved. There were other tough issues, as in all negotiations like that, leading them to some tough peace accord between three warring factions, there were things that were simply papered over. This one they couldn't, nobody would give in, it was a town of 90,000 people, 85,000 people up on the border with Croatia on the Sava River up in the corner next to Yugoslavia, of Bosnia. So, I didn't know anything about it. I mean, I had been doing other things. I followed the Bosnian War generally, but it was all too confusing for me, the Bosnian War. You had when you went to read articles on it, you would read about the Croats and then about the Bosnian Croats and then about the Serbians and then about the Bosnian Serbs and then the Bosniacs, which means Bosnian Muslims as opposed to Muslims elsewhere. It became

very difficult to follow, all the factions, and all of the ins and outs and I had plenty on my plate out in the South Pacific when I was ambassador out there. So, I followed it generally, but I didn't follow it closely. Well, would I take this on? He would give me overnight. So, I went to bed, got up in the morning and I'd been thinking about it and I said, "Yes, I think so. I want to get back into the active screen." I had been in the Inspection Corps for about fifteen months, maybe sixteen and I had found it very rewarding, but I was a passive observer. I wanted to be active. So, I told him yes, I hadn't even called my wife. He said, "Leave it to us." I must say within six hours I received in the middle of the day I received call from the Inspector General. She said to me, "Bill we just have been called. The seventh floor wants you to come back. Is this in accordance with what you want to do?" I said, I explained to her and I was in a funny position, but I said, "Look, if it's serious I'll do it." I would like to think with some reluctance, maybe not, maybe she was happy to see my backside. Within two or three days I was back in Washington and then within three or four days of that I was sitting at a huge table in Vienna where all the foreign ministers of the various countries that were helping to implement the Dayton Peace Accord. They are called, it's a new term and it's unique only to the Balkans, unique only to Bosnia. They were called, these fifty-five nations, the Peace Implementation Council. That's what they were called, the Peace Implementation Council. This particular issue, Brcko, there were only two entities in Bosnia, it's like having two states in the United States, and they're shaped like an amoeba and at one point the amoeba for the Serbs comes down to 5,000 meters and is right at this city called Brcko. That's why they felt they had to have it because they had stolen it fair and square during the war and they ere going to keep it. I'm paraphrasing what?

Q: Teddy Roosevelt?

FARRAND: It was a Senator Hiacowa from San Francisco. He was a semanticist when we wee going to give back the Panal Canal. He said, "We stole it fair and square." I think it was Hiacowa, I think so.

Q: Well, anyway, it referred to the Panama Canal.

FARRAND: Anyway, and to a small extent, this little thing of Brcko, is not unlike the Panama Canal. It was this little strip of land about twenty kilometers long and it was only at its widest point about ten kilometers and that was where the road, the major east west highway went through. That's how the Serbs felt they had to. On either side of it there were half a million Serbs and I for the reader or the listener I depict it the following way. The two, first of all Bosnia and Herzegovina is the size of West Virginia. It had about 4.2, 4.3 million people before the war. West Virginia doesn't have that I don't think. (End of tape)

Q: Yes, you had gone on after the other tape had run out so you'll have to do a bit of back tracking. Bill, maybe you could start you were telling about Brcko as being between betwixt and between the pommel of the saddle between the Serbs on one side and the Serbs on the other side.

FARRAND: I'll try to recreate and I hope I don't double over, but anyway, the quick description without having a white board of Bosnia as I've already indicated the size of the territory, but it was broken down at the Dayton Peace Accords because there was a hammered out agreement that the Serbs would have forty-nine percent of the territory and the Bosnians and the Croats,

Bosniacs, which are the Muslims and the Croats would have fifty-one. Now, this was a, as you can imagine, a terrific problem of allocating real estate around the country between these two entities. It meant in the case of the Serbs that the Serb entity ended up looking like an amoeba. It was the what's the word we use in American politics when you.

Q: The gerrymander.

FARRAND: It was the gerrymander from hell. A quick description would be like this. The Croat Muslim federation if you would visualize them in your mind as a mule standing facing roughly north south, maybe a little bit northeast, southwest, orientation, a mule and then over that mule would be thrown a saddle and two saddlebags. One saddlebag goes down the right-hand side, the eastern side, the other saddlebag goes down the western side to the left as you look at it. Each saddlebag was half of the Serb population, roughly half a million people in each saddlebag. The saddlebags came together at the top of the mule with a saddle and the saddle was the narrow corridor and the pommel of the saddle was Brcko, the little city of about 85,000 people before the war that had been unremarkable for most of its history. Five hundred year old town with the banks on the Sava River which had been an internal river in Yugoslavia so it was no big deal. It had been an unremarkable town for maybe one hundred years or seventy-five years it had been under Austro-Hungarian rule control. It had marks of Austro-Hungary in the village you could see that. Only because of the accident of war, Brcko assumed enormous importance because it was the second serious city that Milosevic's Serbian forces out of Serbia hit on the night of late April 3, 1992. They swept into the town, blew up both of the bridges, this is element of the Yugoslavian national army, Yugoslavs and these terror groups, militias that were under such people as Archon and Shashell and Captain Dragan and all of these other unfavored characters. Archon has gone to his rest, which I hope is not a rest. There was a city between Brcko and the border of Yugoslavia called Yillia. It was hit first and then Brcko was hit. In the succeeding two weeks, or maybe a month they became, these towns just became horrible places. As these thugs came through with their AK47s driving little old ladies, little old men out of their houses, stealing their televisions, stealing their washing machines. Anybody who wasn't a Serb was driven out and the house was destroyed. There was a huge amount of destruction.

At the point where the saddle, at the top, the Sava River is right there and on the other side is Croatia. That doesn't help Bosnia having Croatia across the river doesn't help Bosnia. Having Yugoslavia just maybe forty kilometers from Brcko on the Dreena River, that doesn't help. The destabilization because there were hard lined forces both in Croatia and in Serbia and they all came together with an intensity here in this little town because the Serbs felt, there was an east west highway through there. I'm talking of Bosnian Serbs now, the Bosnian Serbs. They had to keep that east west highway. As I said, they had stolen, raped and pillaged Brcko fair and square and they were going to keep it. Now, the Muslims and the Croats who together had made up about seventy percent of the population of Brcko before the war felt that for reasons of equity and simple justice they should have access to that town again because it was most of the real estate. By the way, you're talking about a little town, that's true, but this wasn't primitive. This was a nice little town, with little houses and nice houses.

Q: Nice town, not a bunch of mud huts.

FARRAND: Absolutely not. Yes. They had a library before the war; they had two nice hotels. They had twenty-six or twenty-seven factories. Brcko it worked out had produced for Yugoslavia much of the vegetable oil, which is pressed out of seeds like sunflower and rapsey and other stuff like that. They had a big huge plant that produced much of the vegetable oil for all of Yugoslavia. Just works that way. They had a big shoe factory and the shoe factory employed 1,200 people and you figure 1,200 times four, because the average family would be four. That would be 4,800 people, close to 5,000 people living directly on the shoe factory, well it was the ripple effect. That was destroyed utterly during the war. Housing, I mean. I'm laying out for you why it's important here.

Now, there was a ceasefire line which I think I've mentioned, there's a ceasefire line in the Brcko area, the corridor, this long narrow corridor which is so strategically important for the Serbs and for the others to keep the two sides of the saddlebags together. The two saddlebags together. The ceasefire was a real line; the trenches, the minefields and everything were established in this area. They were real; they were as a result of heavy fierce fighting during the war. They were not drawn politically as Dayton felt, they were real. Right in the middle the United States Army carved out a place for a camp right on the line and demined it, demined it with huge machines that came in and blew up mines and then they put themselves in, about nine months prior to my arrival. So, the army was running it when I arrived. There was a lieutenant colonel in charge of eight hundred troops, but he was basically doing the things that needed to be done to keep the warring factions apart and to start setting the stage for a return of refugees and internal displaced persons to go home which is the primary right under the Dayton Accord. People have a right to return to their homes freely and without fear. That was my number two job.

The number one job when I got there was to restore freedom of movement because before the war the Brcko Municipality which it was called. Brcko was the seat of we would call a county, like Fairfax. It would like drawing a line right through the middle of Fairfax and up to the north would live all of the I don't know what, and in the south would live all of the others. Then they would be divided. In the southern portion and right in a horseshoe shape around the city of Brcko everything was leveled, leveled. I never, I read about Dresden in World War Two. I'm sure it wasn't as bad as Dresden, but that's what struck my mind when my helicopter landed there on April 11, no April 10, 1997. Now, but to go back, so the whole peace agreement that was hammered out in Dayton in three weeks almost fell apart because of Brcko. It almost fell apart. Neither side would budge at all. It was going to become, people were concerned, it would become Kaiser's belie again. A trigger for more fighting from the partisan groups, things of this nature. So, they agreed at Dayton, this was before my time, I had no knowledge of this, I was out doing other things, inspecting posts in Africa, they agreed at Dayton, I think it was Christopher who came forward and said, "Look, we can't resolve this issue. We're going to have to figure out what to do. What if we did this? What if" lawyers probably do this, "what if we put this under arbitration, finding arbitration for one year? What about that?" In other words, we close this discussion down, this three week discussion down and we leave this one issue out here hanging, breathing, but we put it under binding arbitration and all three of you, will put a tribunal. We'll have a Serb and we'll have a representative of the Federation and a representative of the Republic of Serbska. They'll both be legal minds and the two of them together will get together and select a third member to be the presiding arbitrator under UN rule under the United Nations

rules. This doesn't mean it's the United Nations, but they used those rules. So, reluctantly, Milosevic said yes because he is a snake. Tudjman said yes, and Ambagavich was very unhappy. Ambagavich was very unhappy. He said, this is an unfair, unjust way of going about this, but I'll go about it because we need peace. It was agreed. In world court, these two people were assigned. The Serbs named their man and the Bosniacs named their man. The Croats were not represented. But, those were very weak, they were professors of law, they were very weak. They had no mandate, they were just figureheads, they could do nothing. So, when it came time for them to select they couldn't do it. So, the world court stepped in and with consultations with the United States and named an American who had been the legal advisor for Cyrus Vance, secretary of state and then the key legal guy on Holbrook's team, a guy named Robert Sopoan from Covington. Named him to be the providing arbitrator. He then took over the tribunal and for one year struggled to do something about Brcko.

Q: This was before your time?

FARRAND: Before my time, for one year they struggled to do something about Brcko. They could not resolve it, nothing changed, nothing. In fact, if anything they became more firmly entrenched. We must have it, we must have it. I think it was the presiding arbitrator, but it could have been somebody else, but I think it was he who said, "What we're probably going to have to do here after a year is up, we're going to put this under international supervision. We're going to put it under direct supervision. We're going to put a supervisor right on a plane in there." People agreed and I got my phone call and I accepted and the next thing I know I'm in front of the Peace Implementation Council in Vienna, a massive room, glittering chandeliers all the way around and I'm sitting at the front table right next to the high representative. The high representative was the ex-prime minister of Sweden, a young, brilliant man by the name of Carl Bildt and Bildt, Bildt, I'm not sure, well, yes, I am sure. I think that Bildt's relationship with Holbrook and Holbrook's relationship with Bildt was less than harmonious. They couldn't have an American; they did not want an American in charge. The principal deputy high representative was an American. In fact, that's wrong. In fact, that is also wrong. They put a German in as the principal deputy high representative. Then they had three deputy high representatives around the country. One in Mustar in the southwest, one up in the north, so I had two titles. I was the deputy high representative in the north and I was the supervisor of Brcko. All of this was codified in a document known as the award. Again, and I learned that when an arbitrator arbitrates between two parties or three, whatever, the decision that comes down is an award. So, the first award came down in Rome, it was signed in Rome, Italy in February of 1997. It established this supervisory regime for Brcko. It all had to do with Brcko. It was forty pages long. Buried in there it states that there will be a deputy high representative named by the high representative and then he would have two hats, that person and it would be a he, believe me. I'm in front of this huge room and they introduce me and I'm sitting here saying to myself, "What in God's name have you gotten yourself into?" I had no idea. I want to make this point now, if I don't I'll make it probably at the end, but I want to make this point now. Apart from life experience, apart from all that goes into what that makes up a reasonably educated person in this world, I had no prior training or no prior preparation. My Foreign Service career did not prepare me for what was about to come and fall on me. We are taught in the Foreign Service as diplomats, and this is the point, if there is a point out of this, if there is one. We're trained to be close observers of host country governments. We are trained to analyze, to observe, to analyze and to report on what we

see and to suggest policy options and if the policy options are accepted back here in the metropol, and then they come back out and say yes this is what we shall do, then we become part of the implementation of that policy, but the policy is carefully controlled afar or by the ambassador. It is coordinated and when we implement it our implementation does not go to interfering in the affairs of the other country. In fact, that's one of the other things we're never supposed to do. You must not interfere in the affairs. Well, of course, we do it all the time, but we're not supposed to do it. We become nudgers of policy. Don't you think you should do this? We try to through exhortation and other things persuade oral argument to persuade the others to do what we wish to have done. We do not take over, but in this job as supervisor I was given the task of going in and running this town. I was very close to people would say proconsul and I used the word, so I'm tied to it now, I rarely do; for sake of shorthand, so there you are.

Q: What did you find when you got to Brcko?

FARRAND: From the time that they called me on February 27, I think it was out in Riyadh and I was back at this big meeting in Vienna on the sixth of March. I then went to Sarajevo where the high representative had his office in a big bombed out old building. I was given; it was catchers catch can, but I was given as much as they could give me by way of briefings. I was introduced to the military side, I was introduced at the non-governmental organization side, I was introduced to those international organizations, such as the special representative of the secretary general, who at that time was a Norwegian ambassador; a representative to the Red Cross to the International Rescue Committee, to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE, which was there primarily to monitor and hold the technical aspects of elections and all of these things were supposed to get me ready to go up there. In addition, there was this basic document called the award. In the award, it stated, and I'm going to quote this, there's other things that it says, but I'm going to quote this, it stated that, "As the supervisors, such orders and regulations as the supervisor may deem fit to issue will prevail as against any existing law. Such orders and regulations as the supervisor may deem fit to issue shall prevail as against any, any law."

Q: This is known as carte blanche.

FARRAND: Any. In my little microcosm, my little postage stamp I want to explain this because I think it didn't get on here. The city of Brcko before the war, there were probably throughout the entire province of Bosnia and Herzegovina because it was a province of Yugoslavia at one time. There are probably something on the order of thirty or forty, thirty-five counties. They called them obschenas. Thirty counties. This was one county. Brcko was the seat of that county. The county itself was probably something on the order of five hundred and fifty square kilometers. So, you can drop that down to, what would that be three hundred and fifty square miles? Something like that? Not big, but not small. The war cut it right in half and at the end of the war to the north with the Serbs who were living in all the Bosniac houses and before the war the municipality, that is the county of Brcko, as I said had about 85,000 people in it, but the plurality, the vast plurality were Muslims and they were in the towns, but they were the entrepreneurs. They had the houses. The Serbs were mostly country people. The hard scrabble farmers, but then they moved into the town and took over these houses and in the heart of the town this was planned by Karagee and company. They were stuck that town with Serbs so that it

could never go back and that's what they did. They destroyed 10,000 homes so if you figure a family and then times four, that's 40,000 people out of a population of 80,000 that were left homeless and driven out. The tension and the pressure was enormous.

Now, your question goes to what did I find when I arrived? I wanted to tell you about my authority which was something again that I had never touched in the Foreign Service and with thirty years in the Foreign Service, I had never had, I mean sure sometimes I would run a section and you know how it is in the Foreign Service. You think management, you run a junior officer and a half of a secretary and that goes for management? Now, suddenly I've got a staff, an international staff of about twenty people. I'll just quickly go through. I had Brits, Germans, Danes, Swedes, I had an Australian believe it or not. I had one Canadian later on, then two Canadians. I had an Italian later on; I had a Swiss later on, a Swiss Italian. I had for a couple of years I had a Spanish woman, a newspaper reporter from Madrid who came on my staff to run my press. It was just a polyglot and then we had to hire local people because we were given an office in the downtown which was an old communist trading house full of plate glass windows; plate glass windows on the ground floor, big windows on every floor, I mean, my God. No setback, it was just on the street, no setback at all. The military lived four thousand meters away, which is roughly three miles away. They were in battle rattle. Do you know what that means?

Q: Yes, flack jackets, helmets?

FARRAND: Flack jackets, keblars, they call them today, helmets. Every time they went out they bristled and they had Bradley fighting machines when I first arrived rumbling through the town. They even had a huge tank, big tank; big massive thing because it had to block the river access, had to block the access to the bridge. They had jury-rigged a couple of baileys because the bridge had been dropped. Two spans had been dropped out of seven spans, two were dropped. We spanned those spans with old World War Two baileys.

Q: Bailey being a type of bridge?

FARRAND: Yes, kind of a temporary bridge. Then the bridge could then be used, but only by the army going back and forth, that would be our army because we had a massive camp up in Hungary. So, they would go across, go through Croatia, into Hungary. Croatia was at its fattest point there, but its fattest point is only a couple of hundred miles, a hundred and fifty miles something like that. The town was and they were all waiting for this supervisor to come. Finally, the day comes, Bildt who was one of my minor heroes I really think the world of Carl Bildt. He has something, he taught me a lot and one of the things he taught me was the way a politician looks at problems like this. I'm afraid that people in our profession have a tendency to immediately in a circumstance like that immerse themselves in either the written or the oral word; start issuing reports. Now, I have never considered myself, I'm going to say this because I'm retired now, I've never considered myself a typical Foreign Service officer. I did not go to an Ivy League school, quite the contrary and I learned what I learned on the run. My masters degree was in economics, it was not in diplomacy, law and diplomacy. So, I learned what I learned on the run. I never really in fact, it was, when I came in there was no course over here at the Foreign Service Institute on how to be a political officer or an economic officer. I had to take it from my bosses and from criticisms that come back. I always kind of approached some of this probably a

little too tentatively at first and it took me time to catch my wind in the Foreign Service. I can look back now and say that some of that, where I don't consider myself cut from a mold of the Foreign Service. It may have been good for me up there in Brcko because I have a naturally, I just have a naturally outgoing personality, it's just the way I am. I tend to talk more than I should and that is not bad when you don't want somebody who is terrible introverted in a job where you've got all these people that are seething with anger and distrust and they're looking at you. I'm just going to give you this anecdote, I know I shouldn't lard this up with anecdotes.

Q: No, anecdotes are fine.

FARRAND: This was big day, the supervisor was finally coming. Two or three helicopters, escort helicopters took off from the base in Sarajevo, Bildt was sitting next to me. I had never been to Brcko before. It was only a forty-minute ride over these low mountains, I mean I've got to tell you. Bosnia could be a very beautiful place if it didn't have the troubles that it has. We went up there, we had the head of the United Nations, the special representative, SRSG they called it, the head of OSCE, the head of the United Nations International Police Task Force who was a Dane, a policeman, we had the American ambassador and that was wise, there was no American ambassador at the time. There was a charge and he came. There was a bevy of people that came from the press and this helicopter has lifted off and then forty minutes later we start settling down over what once was a soccer field and probably is today, in Brcko. Heavy, armed guards around and out I come. Now, I am not a physically imposing person, I'm five foot eight, maybe five foot seven now that age has battered me down. I step off the plane and I've got Carl Bildt beside me and he's six foot five. He's a Viking, a Viking and we start across, and I'm introduced to the town fathers such as they were. There were no town fathers, but there was a mayor that had been appointed a Serb. They wait and wait and wait and wait and finally they put me into a cavalcade. I ride into town in this bullet proof vehicle, bullet proof and in front there are these HUMVs and in back there are HUMVs and the things rumble, rumble into town. Again, I'm asking myself, "What in God's name have you gotten yourself into. You damned fool." At the same time, you're excited by this prospect you say, Jesus this is a huge. As we settle down, I look at the devastation around that town, my heart sank. I said, "Well, we're supposed to get this built back again?" By the way I should say here, when they asked me to do the job, they said, "Look you're going to have," are you ready for this? "You're going to have two million dollars in walking around money in your pocket and you're going to see something and you're going to say get that fixed. So, you can make a quick impact on the people, if the international community is here it's going to make a quick impact on your life and it's going to start making things better. It's going to lower the temperature because people have had nothing and we're going to give you something and when you have something you have something to lose. So, I was told not to worry. Two million. Three years later after much haranguing and jawboning on my part and coming back, three years later I received the first installment on that which was $235,000. Three years later. Now, I go back and I ask myself, I'm jumbling in and out, what should I have done differently? Should I have said I'd like that in writing? I'm talking to an old friend who says, "Don't worry you're going to have it." Should I say I want that in writing, Bill? Then I'm calling into question his veracity and we do things by word, don't we? Yes, well. I land, we come into town and I'm going to tell you this anecdote. There was a huge crowd around this building. When I say huge crowd, I'm going to say three hundred people, that's not huge, but it seemed huge. Upstairs I go, we all go into this office that has been

arranged for me later with a big, big thing of bulletproof glass between my desk and the window. It was installed later. It kind of made me feel good having that bulletproof glass right there. We go out to the front and they say, "You're going to give a speech now. You're going to give a speech and say you're here." We had worked on a speech together, but it had largely been written for me and I had added my thing to this and that. As we walk out to the front, I've got Bildt who is the higher rep on my staff and others. As we walk out I'm going to do the Foreign Service thing, just stand there and be you know, with my little shined shoes. Vince grabbed me by the arm and says, "Come on." I said, "Where is this?" He says, "Bill, come on." He took me by the arm down the stairs and into the crowd and it drove the security people nuts. I had a security detail of six guys. Had them for all the time I was there. Great cost. Anyway, down we went. Now, I don't speak the language, a little bit. He doesn't speak the language a little bit, but we both have interpreters. So, Bildt has got me right in the middle and the people surround us. Serbs all, all Serbs. I remember one man who had about three teeth in his head and he had a huge bushy mustache, with a black flat hat on and he is very angry and he's looking at Bildt and he's saying, "I'll never live with the bastards again. I'll never let them back. We'll never let them back." Bildt is saying to him and this was the anecdote, Bildt is saying to him, "Who do you hate?" "I hate them; I hate them, the Turks. We'll never let them back." He said, "Well, what happened?" He said, "They burned my house and they took my sister away and they beat up my boy, these are people who live right down the street." Bildt says, "The people lived right down the street, is that correct?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Do you know who they are?" He said, "Yes, I do know who they are." Bildt said, "Then hate them, don't hate them all, and hate the people that did it to you. Don't hate everyone. Hate the two or three that did it. Take out your anger on them." That was a very good lesson for me to learn because I used that line many times after when I would be in similar circumstances and people shouting. There is standoffishness in our profession that is inappropriate for a situation like that. Can you understand what I'm saying?

Q: Oh, absolutely. In other words you're saying in this case, I mean you really have to be the politician. The acumus politician to get up and get into the.

FARRAND: You have to be the politician. You have to be, that's right. When I was at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, I don't want to hammer this. I know I sound like Johnny One Note, but when I was at the Industrial College as deputy commandant, so called, there was two years running a, they took the student body and put them through a test called the Meyers Briggs personality. It was how you like to receive information, how you like to relate to the world. The doctor the Ph.D. that did it lives over here in northern Virginia and I'll think of his name. He would come into my office before he went off to make his presentation and we got talking. I said to him, "How is this, is this really a valuable thing?" He'd say, "Yes, it's very valuable. It's been going on for many years. It's based on union psychiatry." It basically, there is a strong indicator if people prefer to be quiet or introverted or prefer to be extroverted. He said, "Let me tell you something about your branch of government, the Foreign Service. I've done this at the Foreign Service Institute. At this stage we have millions of validations of this test. The American people are roughly two-thirds extroverted and a third introverted. It's just the reverse in the Foreign Service." Now, you can believe that or not or it's a broad statistic. There does need to be, this is not the time to be owlish and academic, hiding behind the door, issuing reports and orders. So, I took this very much to heart what Bildt had said and others and I became, I let that side of me open up more. There were times when you had to be a play actor and times when

you had to be stern, but there were other times when what you really needed to do was listen to people, just get out there and let them nater at you, let people natter at you. I had five children I know there's times when what they really do is just air their grievances. I'll stop there.

Q: What were the issues, I mean, how did it progress?

FARRAND: I had four objectives laid on me by the award. I was given one year to restore freedom of movement in this small little Gaza Strip. They called it the Porsavina Corridor because the Sava River is the root word, Porsavina and it's the corridor. Nothing could move in this 225 square kilometer spit of land if it wasn't Serb. Anything other than Serb, automobile, person, would be in trouble. Same to the south. The Serbs could not go to the south of the line and the line was actually very reasonably defined because there are the mine fields on either side and nobody had kept good records during the war. It's still a problem today, a huge problem. First thing was to get restored. So, you had the mine fields, you had freedom of movement, no automobiles traveled north south, they all traveled east west and trucks and other things there could be no crossing of the line. That was the first thing because in order because the second thing which was crucially important was to set up a procedure to enable under the Dayton Peace Accord people to return to their homes of origin. As I've already told you before the ward Brcko and the Brcko Corridor were seventy percent non-Serb. Because of the war it was ninety-seven percent Serb when I arrived, packed in there by Coragig and the hardliners to frustrate me. We called them biological blockers. Now, as Bosnia had lost during the war thirty percent of its housing nationwide, thirty percent. That meant, and of course, there were many people who left the country and went off to northern Europe, Germany, Switzerland, places like that, Austria and some to the United States. We have 100,000 Bosnians in the United States, most of them Bosniacs, most of them Muslims as a result of that war, but they had left. That took out some pressure on the housing, but still you were down thirty percent of your housing. People were packed into houses, two and three families. It was our job to make it possible for those people to come back north of the line because the Muslims and the Croats were south of the line, but to the north of the line come back and take over their houses. The strategy on that had to be all worked out and it was a very delicate thing.

The third thing I had to do and that I had to do within a year, I had to get the people back within a year. I set myself a target not knowing it, but I set myself a target of trying to have 7,000 people back by the end of the year. I was told by people that that was considered quite remarkable, but I had no judge. They asked me, "How many are you going to have back at the end of the year?" I said, "Well, 7,000." They said, "Well, they'll bless you if you do." Then the third thing was to hold free and fair elections in that year with the organization for security and cooperation. The fourth thing was to restart the economy. The first three things we were able to get done mostly. We were able to get a good heavy start on it. It was all a process but we couldn't get the economy restarted. That was just too premature. Those are the four objectives.

Q: Let's take a look. The traffic one I would think would be with the military force that would be almost the simplest one to do or not? Maybe it wasn't?

FARRAND: I'm just going to try to say a few words and be brief on the role of the military in Bosnia. There were twelve annexes to the Dayton Peace Agreement. The Dayton Peace

Agreement had a framework up front and then there were twelve annexes. The first annex was responsible, eleven or twelve. The first annex was the military annex and there was annex A and annex B and they took up together about twelve pages of the whole award. That was the military's obligation and that was negotiated at Dayton and it was negotiated between the Pentagon and State Department and all others, too. The basic thrust of the United States Pentagon and the thrust of the military in negotiating their instructions under this peace agreement was to keep out of it as much as possible. Hands off. Be a presence; separate the warring factions around the ceasefire line, which became known as the interentity boundary line. The interentity boundary line, IEBL, was about one thousand kilometers long. Two kilometers to the north of it and two kilometers to the south of it, the military, that would be S4, I4 in the beginning, then S4 was to keep all military activity of any kind out of that area. That became that ribbon of four kilometers, a thousand kilometers long, four kilometers wide all across the country was divided into two entities became S4 country. Nothing went on in there. There could not be movements of Serb forces towed the line or movements from the north or from the south, nothing. By the time S4 got there, I4 got there and then S4, NATO, by the time they got there the two sides had virtually exhausted themselves. So, this job while complex was not, you say, freedom of movement would have been relatively not difficult. This was relatively not difficult. The military took great pride in the fact and still do that they were able to get in and get their job done. Their job was to separate the warring factions and to ensure that they not start again. Pick up arms. Administer military bases to insure that nothing moves inside unless it was approved, etc. Now, when it came to intervening in the affairs of the country, particularly on the security side, the military wanted no part of that, unless, there was a clear danger to life, clear danger to life. Then the U.S. military and the others could move in to help rectify the situation to their delight, but not property. They would not go in to protect property. So, if some Serbs were blowing up buildings, these guys didn't go into to protect the building. They might rumble through town, rumble, rumble, rumble around and suppress things just by their very presence, but getting out and mixing it up, no, that was left to the police. What police? What police? Who were the police? The police were the thugs who were running the God damned war. I know we're not supposed to swear.

Q: Yes, you can. This is all history, you're allowed.

FARRAND: What do I have to rely upon when it comes to restoring freedom of movement? Can I ask the army, the U.S. army to come up and rumble through town and say, "Okay, Mr. Muslim, you follow me, here's my Bradley fighting machine, and you follow me with your little Hugo car and we'll take you up to the middle of town and you can do what you want and when you're ready we'll drive you back down." That's restoring freedom of movement. First, some freedom and some movement. No, there was a contingent, an international contingent of twenty-nine countries sent a total of 258 police to Brcko unarmed to become the International Police Task Force whose responsibility was to monitor and train or train and monitor the local police. The local police at that time were all Serbs and they were wearing purple onion suits, they wore purple camouflage suits which came right out of the war and which were anathema to the Muslims and the Croats when they saw those suits. They wore slouch hats, which were purple. The police had no badge, no identifying documents of any kind, no number, nothing. They had weapons, which they did not display stuffed inside their balloon pants pockets and they were swaggerers. Essentially, their role was to protect the Serb power structure and there were

upwards of five hundred of them. We didn't know who they were. I had another marvelous man who was a police commander, a chief of police from the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico, an American. His age, his looks belied his age. He probably was, he could have been ten years older than he looked. He was in absolute top physical condition, a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in something related to public administration, thoroughly dedicated, stood six foot three, athletic build, an American black by the name of Don Grady. He came in and we sat down and I'd say, "Don, we've got to get the police in shape." He said, "I know. What do you want?" I said, "Well, what do I want?" He said, "Yes, sir you're the boss. You tell me what you want." I said, "I think I want a better police force." "Yes, but specifically what do you want?" "Well, hum." He said, "Why don't I come back to you with a plan and we'll look at it?" I said, "Do that, do that." He did. I had a Russian; oh I didn't tell you I had a Russian on my staff of ambassador rank, my deputy. I had two deputies, a retired brigadier general from the British Royal Parachutes and a retired ambassador from the Soviet Union. They were my two deputies. So, we had a triumvirate, me, a Brit and so we called ourselves, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin. We even took a photograph, they did it, and they cut out the faces and they put our faces in, it's a sketch. With everybody talking and we would talk these things through in endless discussion, how to do everything because there was no template. There was no book; I couldn't turn to anything. As a matter of fact, nothing has ever been written, I am writing it now.

Q: Excellent.

FARRAND: I am, but because I'm spending a lot of time blarneying with you and others I don't get much going on that, but anyway, the thing is that we had to get a police force and it was the civilian contingent of the international community, this task force, IPTF, International Police Task Force, under the United Nations that helped to get the police set up properly so that we could then have a multiethnic police force on the streets; so that the people from the south at least feel that they weren't going to be picked up by cops who were instantly going to beat them up. We had all the patrols on the streets, there would never be two and two. The police had worked together before the war. We got rid of half of the five hundred thugs. We sent them through a psychological testing and attesting on what they knew about police. Half of them didn't know anything about police; they were just brought on. We put training courses in place. It was not easy and people who listen to this say how could you assess cross culturally psychological aspects of a person? Well, it's hard and I'm not sure that we did it right in every case. We surely didn't, but we cut half of them out and we sent them off to other parts of the Republic of Serbska to join police forces elsewhere, whatever, just get them out of town. We cut it down to about 230 officers and then we, by that time, we were going to hold elections then on the basis of the election results those ratios were used to put the multiethnic police together. There were several things moving in parallel all at once all the time.

Now, freedom of movement. First priority. I got to Brcko on the 10th of April. Three weeks later, it's May 1, now May 1st in the communist world is May Day. This is going to be a big day. The Muslims came to me and said, "We want to bring two busloads of our citizens up to visit you in the heart of Brcko on May Day. We always celebrated May Day and so we want to do it now." They told me this, I don't know what day May Day was, but say May Day was a Monday. They tell me this about on a Saturday, we're coming north with these two buses and a long string of cars and we want to come in and you are our protector, you are our little godfather. You will

protect us, throw your mantle of protection over us as we move north on this bomb, mortar pocked road that is just a disaster. You could only crawl on it because of the potholes and the mortar rounds. You couldn't go out there because of mines. We're going to come up and we're going to do it at 11:00 in the morning on May 1st. Well, this is my decision, so I get my people together and we debate back and forth, back and forth. If we get the police, can we do it? I go down and see the local police commander. I physically go down and see the local police commander. Drive over, drop into his office. He's a guy, he sits behind his desk like this and his name is Velosovich. I said, "Commander Velosovich, chief, can you deal with this? Can your police force deal with this because they're asking to come up, two busloads, four kilometers up the road to visit me in my office and turn around and go on back? No big deal, but can you deal with it?" He kept his face straight. I said, "It's important that you do this. You know this is one of my functions here." He shrugs his shoulders and looks unhappy. I said, and this was a big mistake on my part because I had been told by people that had been dealing with him. If you can get a Serb in a position of authority to say, "Yes, I will do it", if you can get them to say that to you, then you can rely upon that, but if they don't, then you don't have anything. You can walk away from that meeting and you think, well he didn't say no. You can't take the lack of a no for a yes, which I chose to do. The military, the United States military started getting on the line, they were very nervous. This was my first test of me and the base was right on the road and actually it straddled the road. These two buses would have to go through this military base and then come out the other side and go right up the road. I had a two star general fly in and say, "What are you going to do?" I had a one star general come up to me and say, "Mr. Ambassador, do you know what's happening, or do you know what you're going to do here?" I remembered him and I said, "General Abasak, let me ask you a question." He had all these troops outside rumbling. I said, "Let me ask you a question. You read this, it says that my job is to get freedom of movement going. Now, this is my first opportunity to test whether how bad that is. What am I going to do? Am I going to wait on you because what I'm sensing here is that you guys wish this wouldn't happen? You don't want the commotion. Yes? This instruction doesn't speak to you, it speaks to me." I remember saying that to him. He just went and looked at me. Anyway, I stepped off the diving board with that. I said, two buses can come, no cars, no trailers, two buses can come up, they'll come to my office, I'll meet the delegation head and then he goes back down and they all get on the bus and leave. The day comes, everybody is tense and they start rolling forward. I start getting reports. I'm just sitting in my office, but I'm getting reports, we had walkie talkies. They're coming up through, they're moving now. What happened, just before these two buses were to go through the camp and head north the three or four kilometers to my office, two other buses loaded with U.S. servicemen going out to Hungary across the damaged bridge for R&R headed out. This wasn't very well coordinated. This was if you want to think about it, a mistake that I never knew. The military never told me they had two. These two buses which are of Hungarian make, start coming up that road and the thugs who had all been preplanned by the local hardline Serbs with the rocks as these buses came up, the thugs came out from behind the bombed out basements and sheds and things, they all came out throwing rocks at these two buses. With one driver who was a Hungarian was hit, the rock came through the windshield, hit him and glazed off of him. These two buses came under the attack. Well, they keep on going, they get to Brcko, they keep on going they keep on going because now they can't turn around and go back down, they don't want to get hit again and the servicemen and, remember, force protection is the crucial thing. Force protection is number one, nobody can get hurt. So, they got to keep on going, they get to the town, they get to the bridge, the tank pulls

back and these two buses get across and once it closes, once in Croatia, everything is all right. They've patched themselves up. This one guy got hurt, they took him to the hospital up there and the military was crazy now. Then the two buses loaded with the Bosniacs start up the road. The thugs, not being very well organized, with their sneakers and their leather jackets, they've dispersed. The buses make it all the way up to my office, quite nice. It's a warm day, the sun is shining and it's hot and there's no air conditioning. The two buses pull in front of my office. I send word down to have all the people come off and serve them soft drinks. We had that set up. They all went inside. We had a large gathering room. I said to send the top delegation up, let the top delegation come up, the guy that had headed the delegation into Bosniac. He is now their Prime Minister of Bosnia right now. His name is Labugia. They come into my office, he speaks English, studied in America and I said, "Now, this is a tense moment and you're only going to stay here for about five minutes." There are eight of them around the table. I said, "You can stay for five minutes. I'm happy that you got this far, this thing isn't over yet. I'm doing this because you requested to come, but my responsibility is not to instigate a bow up here in this town again." Just as I'm starting to say that, in comes my lieutenant saying, "Sir, there's a crowd gathering around the two buses out in the street and they're beginning to sound real ugly." I said, "Where are the police?" He said, "Well, the police are there, but they've let the crowd get through." The IPTF commander, this man came in to see me and said, "What do you want me to do?" I said, "Can you get out there?" He said, "Yes." He went down, he waded right into them. Now, he's six foot three, just like Bildt. He waded right into, talking to all of them, talking to the people. Now, let's not have any trouble here. He looked at the Serb police and they're in the road, but they're doing nothing because Yalosovich, the guy that I said had never given me the high sign so he said, "It's getting ugly." I said to everybody sitting around my table, "I think now it's time to reboard the buses. It's good that you came. Reboard the buses now, we'll get your people" there were forty people on one bus and forty on another, "get your people back on the buses now." Now the way the buses had pulled up to the building was such that if the building is this way and the bus pulls up this way and this was the entrance to the building to get back out, but this is where the driver sits, the entrances are here. So, the people who come back out have to go around and negotiate the crowd to get back into the buses. Probably 250 to 300 people were now gathering and there was a harridan, a woman screaming in the midst with big black hair, screaming about the Turks and how evil everything was. They get back aboard the buses and they finally get back just before the first rock hit. We get our people out and I said, "I don't want them going back down that road, I want them to go through town over to the Arizona road and down through the Arizona market and out. Get them out of the town and out into the countryside and down. I want them not to go back because the thugs will have reloaded and be ready for them." It was so many pockmarks they would have been sitting ducks. They left the town, they started out and went through the town and they start out to the countryside over about eight kilometers and then head south by about six kilometers and be back south of the interentity boundary line, about fourteen kilometers. Now, you asked me whether these things are easy or not and you asked me with the military there isn't this the easiest thing? As they pulled out, the thugs had been repositioned. The organizers of the opposition had prepositioned them. As they pulled out on the first street and they got through two of these massive apartment buildings, out from the alleyways came phalanxes of thugs throwing rocks and they busted most of the windows. Everybody by this time is ducking way down below that metal, you know how the metal comes up and then there's windows? So, they were going through town, they got out the edge of town, the U.S. military is activated by now, but they are not in anyway intervening in no

way. Helicopters above the buses while the buses are being attacked the helicopters are above. You would have thought that would have intimidated somebody. No, not at all. By the time these buses got back to what we call the Arizona market, where they could then be back in safe territory, they were just. We had three people hurt, including the guy that was the leader. He got a little scratch. In fact, I think he loved it. Nobody got killed and I was the luckiest guy on earth. I had four star generals visiting me. I had people on the phone, the Pentagon was concerned, but I established wittingly or not, what my line was. My line was, it's pretty bad. I couldn't rely upon the military; I had to have a police force. This took time. Long answer to a short question.

Q: Let's talk about the police force, how did this work out? Were you able to get a police chief who cooperated, were you able to get a police force that would do something?

FARRAND: This was one of the most delicate tasks of all and this became a serious flashpoint between Radervonkovadgidg.

Q: Who is a Serb nationalist leader in Bosnia. Also, an unapprehended as of today, war criminal?

FARRAND: It's one of the greatest blights on our whole policy toward Bosnia that he hasn't been picked up. We're going after Osama Bin Laden, but we can't go after... He's responsible for just as much killing. A woman by the name of Vienna Plotsige, who was also a nationalist Serb, but somewhat more moderate and somewhat, and she lived in the western saddlebag, he lived in the eastern saddlebag, which is by far the more orthodox hardline. The whole question became who controls Brcko and in their calculus who controls the police force of Brcko. It came down to a big struggle for the control of the police force of Brcko with us in the middle and they could play all kinds of games around us because of course, they know the territory, they know the terrain, the language, the people, the history and we are meddling outsiders who are struggling to catch up to these power plays. It all culminated in an enormous eruption of violence on the 28th of August, 1997 starting at about 3:00 in the morning and ending probably not the next morning at 3:00, but maybe at noon the following day. The police of Brcko, this guy Velosovich that I was telling you about, tried to throw his lot in with Plasige to the west, the more moderate. The people in Poly, Karagig forces wanted that to happen not at all. A great struggle took place that broke out into open conflict over the police station and the U.S. military in this instance did get involved. They did get involved. They actually got down there and tried to ring off the police station with barbed wire and to protect its incumbents. The extreme nationalists under Karagig brought in thugs from out of town and there were plenty of thugs in town, but they brought in thugs from out of town and they had a pitch battle at the bridge. Bradleys were brought in, a couple of soldiers got badly hurt and Molotov cocktails were thrown. The whole city was under siege by the people that were raveled out into all of this. All of the vehicles, most of the vehicles that the International Police Task Force had, they had about forty or fifty small vehicles, most of them were destroyed. Most of the vehicles around my compound were destroyed that were left on the street and it was a great big compulsive affair that ended with calm being restored with the help of the U.S. military. That may or may not have been the high point of the hardliners efforts to frustrate what we were doing there, what we were sent out to do. He still remains at large. This is one of the great mistakes of our policy in Bosnia is not to go after that man. If we did go after him, just like Osama Bin Laden, we would take

losses.

Q: How did the military restore order or who helped restore, how was order restored?

FARRAND: In the military way. They just blanketed the town with patrols and everybody again went into a battle mode. All vehicles had fifty caliber guns on the swivels. The people that had been used went back to their homes. All the people were out. What we had to do was get rid of the thugs. So, we did. One of the great lessons I learned from that experience was a gun; a gun pointed at somebody can pacify that person, but only so far. What really pacifies them, what really gets them dodging for cover is a video camera? The army had video cameras and all you need to do is see somebody up there doing this. Before you know it, they'd be jumping, pulling things over, dodging and trying to get out of there. It's marvelous, marvelous. One of the things I asked for as a result of that, I wanted the international community to cough up money for about twenty-five or thirty video cameras that I could give to police patrols. Just bring that up and oh boy, they don't want that. This could be used in lots of places. I don't know why, but surely. It was nip and tuck for some time, we did restore order. We didn't know what had hit us for a while, but we kept on moving with our program. Underlying everything one of the things I've learned from all of this is the hardliners, whoever they may be, wherever they may be, Al Qaida, they do not have a positive program for the people. They don't have a positive program; they have a program of mayhem and destruction and defense and destruction and obstruction, all those words. They don't have a program for the people. What about medical care or social welfare or food or anything of this nature. They're taking care of themselves, the big boys and then they're having their lieutenants who are fanatics out there do all of this mayhem. They don't have a program. The people are threatened, so they are not going to come forward and give you their allegiance, that being the international community. They're not going to come forward and say, "We're happy to have you here." Or any spontaneity of any type. You're not going to get that from them because they're calculating, where do we go, where do we go? Because if they get too far out, they're going to get chopped off by the guys, the hardliners, going to get chopped off or killed. They stay and they shudder and stay in and watch. Then if you, the international community in this case, can restore something like a moniker of normality, something like so that a little store could open that sells milk, little store could open that sells potatoes. People aren't getting hit on the street and they come back out slowly, slowly and start going about their affairs. If you can maintain that and get your police going properly, then you are beginning to achieve something, something, but you've got to keep the peace.

Q: Did you find that the police became an effective force?

FARRAND: Yes, they did. They did, surprisingly, but you couldn't put too much weight on them. You had to keep the International Police Task Force monitoring the patrols, going around with patrols. They have twenty-nine countries, the police, in addition to the United States and the United Kingdom and Germany who would send police, not troops and Spain and Argentina and a few others. You also had countries like Jordan, Egypt, Sierra Leone, and Morocco. It's a tough thing, what's going on, tough thing.

Q: What about people coming. By the time you left could you get people in and out of the area?

FARRAND: Yes, yes, by the time I left they were moving freely north and south, by the time I left. Actually by the end of the first year, people were coming slowly back into town, slowly, slowly. The big problem that we had was how to get Serbs out of houses.

Q: What had, I mean what had stopped the bullyboys from coming in? Were they on call?

FARRAND: Yes, yes. That was a combination of factors of messages being put out. I think that the involvement of the U.S. army on that fateful day back on August 28th, they realized that they had pushed a button one too far because they had picked up. You remember when I told you about the buses coming in and how the helicopters flew overhead while the buses were being destroyed. The helicopters had troops on them and nobody was raising a finger from stopping those buses from being destroyed. Nobody was getting involved. The military was not backing me up on that. People like Karagig, just like Osama Bin Laden built a school. Osama Bin Laden went to school on President Reagan's reaction to the bombing of the marine barracks in Lebanon. You remember what happened? Just simply pulled everybody out and we left. Just pulled them all out and went away with our tails between our legs. Huh? Osama Bin Laden saw that, Osama Bin Laden took a look at what happened in the aftermath of the Cole. Nothing.

Q: A destroyer that was bombed by his people.

FARRAND: A destroyer. Nothing. We went to school on all of these things. The people who are against you are watching you and that happened in Bosnia.

Q: Okay, they saw that our military was ineffective as a protector. So what happened? Why didn't they keep it up?

FARRAND: When the military reacted on August 28th and actually engaged in combat.

Q: I mean there was enough, they didn't send the bullyboys in again after the August time?

FARRAND: There were threats, but they never did it. General Shinsecky was the four star who was in charge of escort at the time. He is now the chief of staff of the army over here at the Pentagon. He came out about a year later and we were standing at the bridge talking, he and I and he said, "You know, Bill, I think they shot, they threw their best shot at us that day and when they failed, they realized that all they could do from then on was fluster and go underground and do other types of intimidation, but don't come up and do it head on again because we stopped them." That was only because the military actually did, did stop them. Now, you see if the military had chosen on the day when the buses were coming through, I didn't say this when I was recounting this. From the time that the buses departed from my office and started back out to go back down south to the interentity boundary line, the IEBL, by another route, army helicopters were above those buses all the way and the thugs by some miracle were transported down the road. There would seem to be an inexhaustible source of rock throwers and you know. The U.S. military helicopters did not set down, deploy and put these guys in irons, no, did not. So, they were being, it was like we could do whatever we wanted and it's nice to have them up there because it's a hot day and they're fanning us. I think they miscalculated.

Q: In your relations with the American military, I would think. I want, you know, after the non-intervention of our support of the S4, during the bus incident, this must have caused a certain amount of tension between you and your staff and the American military because I mean, you know, they didn't do a bloody thing and there must have been a certain amount of embarrassment on their part, too? I mean, how did that work out?

FARRAND: Based on the amount of visits I had from ranking military officers in the aftermath of the main first bus incident, I would say that that incident did more to ring the bell of. You see these things go all the way up to the top to the Pentagon. I can tell you, my name suddenly, at least around those categories, about people involved in that, I'm a name. Farrand. I'm sure they were saying, "What the hell is Farrand doing today?" I am sure as I sit here that at the tank, they said, "What the f--- is Farrand doing out there?" I have no doubt in my mind. Of course, I wasn't there and I've never been in those corridors and all of that, but I just. What I needed. Well, you're going to ask about my relations. Relations between the military and the civilian side were always touch and go. Even in that situation. I look at the Afghanistan situation with a whole different set of eyes perhaps from not wholly different, but in significant respects different from the way you look at it because I am seeing what's going to have to be done coming down the line now when this all settles down. All of these things have lessons. Some large and some small. I'll suppress those comments; however, it's against the background of what I saw in Brcko and what I viewed over time as a microcosm. I had all three ethnic groups in this town. In the thousands that was a microcosm of the macrocosm of Bosnia and, I would argue of the larger regional area, too. Few other communities had all three warring factions in one place. None, that I can think of, not Sarajevo, not Mustar. Now Brcko, the military, the last thing a military commander wants is anything to happen to any one of his soldiers. Minor injuries are acceptable, but a major injury a life threatening injury and heaven forefend, a death of a soldier is that is at the end of the stone because if you are a lieutenant colonel hoping to make full bird in one day. Full bird being full colonel, and you had something like that happen, this is a very unforgiving atmosphere in Washington today in the army, the Pentagon and in the civilian side. Somebody is always to blame in litigious America. If I fall on the sidewalk somebody is to blame, not me, who owns this sidewalk, I sue them. That what happens in the military so that force protection is the very first thing. Everything is gauged on keeping the forces out of danger which puts a tremendous burden on young commanders and these are young commanders, lieutenant commander is in his late thirties or early forties. It puts a tremendous burden on these boys and they're all boys thus far. The need to avoid exposing your forces to danger runs directly counter to what I had to achieve. Now, I didn't want their people to get hurt, but at the same time I'm not going to go anywhere until I test the waters until I find out what the limits are here. Now to the credit of the army and to the credit of the commander, I'm going from May 1st now to August 28th, that would be May, June, July, August, four months later. When the police struggle erupted in the middle of the night in downtown Brcko our military was there and in the course of the day they put themselves in harm's way. By putting themselves in harm's way, they sent a very clear message back up the line. Brcko was not where the decisions were being made. Decisions were being made in the mountain vastness where Karagig was sitting with his counsel and that's what, how it was being done. That message went back up the line that we were not paper tigers, that we were able to go out there. One kid, I think got hurt. Molotov cocktail being thrown at you, I don't care. They escorted some people out of danger. The police chief that I was telling you about from Santa Fe, the International Police Task Force, you know, one of the things that really

drives me crazy in giving an interview like this, I cannot use freely. (End of tape)

Q: You were saying that the international police force was...

FARRAND: Yes, he found himself barricaded during these riots at the police office downtown and we couldn't get at him. The mob was swirling about and we just could not extricate him, well we finally did find a way of getting another vehicle in there and were able to get him out, but and that was with the active collaboration of the U.S. military in this case. Where their instructions were coming from, they did not answer to me, they had to take into account what I was doing, but they didn't answer to me. I could not call upon them for security or anything. They were getting their instructions from the headquarters of the multinational division north which was in Tuzla with instructions from the S4 commander, that would be General Shinsefey in Sarajevo who was probably hearing from the commander of the U.S. forces in Belgium who was probably hearing from the Pentagon. Everybody just was on tenderhooks. Now, I am on and I am not privy to these communications, only privy to what happened, not to what to the. Because I had no secure communications.

Q: Was anybody from the State Department saying to go to it or don't, or were they sort of saying, well, you're on your own, fellow?

FARRAND: One of the great dissidents, dysfunctionalities in Washington in the relations between State Department desk operators and the Pentagon in the time of a crisis of this nature. Now, the crisis that I'm talking about here would not be a crisis if it were not where it happened. I mean, I have a little riot in a town where a few people get roughed up and some Soviets get hurt. This is not, good God, this happens in Northern Ireland everyday, what happened there was a quiet evening in Northern Ireland. It happened to be, however, right in the focus of everybody's' attention. This happened to be the most sensitive area at the time I was there. Today it is not such a sensitive area. It's quite a story about what happened there and I'm not sure I'm going to have the time to stretch it all out and I don't want to say it over here because I want to put it in my book. So, why should I give it to you for free when I want to write it in my book? I should probably start lying and not tell the truth until my book. The facts are that the military had put itself into a very difficult time. After Somalia, right after Vietnam, Somalia for sure where eighteen Rangers were lost, it just kind of made the majors, captains, very uncomfortable and very uneasy. They want to do some more things, but they can't. People lose promotions over it. This is serious. If I'm a one star general and I'm in charge of this particular area and something happens, a couple of soldiers get killed, I'm never going to see two stars. I would just kiss it goodbye. You think, oh sure, you think, oh things can't be that base. Oh, yes, they can.

Q: Back to this, particularly after the May Day thing, did you find that relations between you and the military and your staff cold?

FARRAND: The Brit, my deputy supervisor, who was a brigadier retired, Royal Parachutes, knew the military more than that he knew the American military because he had as an active duty officer in the British army, had come to Ft. Bragg and was made a deputy company commander for one of those exchange programs. So, he knew our people. He took it upon himself to keep a closer tab and a closer watch and I urged him to do so. The difficulty was the

lieutenant colonel at the time, don't need to deal with personalities, did not particularly cotton to this British brigadier. So, it didn't become as easy a flow as it should have been. Now, the fact that S4, the stabilization force had been in position in Brcko for about eight to nine months prior to my arrival, prior to the arrival of a supervisor, civilian supervisor, meant that those lieutenant colonels, there was one prior to me and then this fellow, these lieutenant colonels, they had a civilian responsibility for monitoring the government of that sensitive little area. They became, they had to do things right, worry about what the mayor was doing. They had to do things like be concerned about electricity supply, things that a government of a city would normally do. When I came on the scene, it was after this fellow had been in place for about two months; he was already in the saddle and feeling his oats a little bit. He didn't necessarily I suppose, I never talked to him about him, but could tell by his actions, didn't necessarily feel that this civilian, gray haired, balding, who took a different approach to solving problems indeed was very threatening. Another anecdote that will bring out the point here perhaps you're looking at. When I arrived on April 10, 1997, two weeks before the bus incident, I received a regular stream of delegations of military officers coming up to visit me. A bewildering array, people who were the chief of staff, people who were the deputy adjutant, people who were, you know, decom ops, or G3, or, or G2, G5, G7, coming up to see me and say, "Bill, Mr. Ambassador, we're going to give you all the support you need. You just let us know what you need. Tell me what you need and we will give you that support. Tell me what you need." I would say, "Well, I certainly will and I thank you very much for your offer of assistance. I can't tell you how much it's appreciated. General, I just need a little time to find my footing here because I'm not sure I know what I really need. I don't know what to ask you yet." Well, the U.S. military, before they deploy on any mission outside of their home base wherever that may be here in America, if they deploy and they're going to be under canvas, they take their command components of those contingents who are going over and they bring them together and they subject them to chalkboard instruction, power point instruction, cable cot exercises and they go down to Ft. Poko, Louisiana and they go into the field and they recreate a village just very much like it and they put signs on old blown houses and homes and things, and you move in and you actually run a live exercise. You do it in as close to the conditions as possible and they spend big time on this, I mean big time. When they arrive on the scene, because they've located for six months, they've got a huge job, they have and by the way they train their people for worst case scenarios. So, that when they arrive on the scene, they are most everybody is familiar with the terminology and everybody is familiar roughly with certainly the strategic situation and the tactical situation, tactical more than strategic. Now, here they're faced with a supervisor who was plucked out not more than two weeks earlier from a totally different function in another part of the world, raced around Washington, raced through some quick briefings down in Sarajevo and plopped on the scene who had had no previous experience with police work, supervising police forces, no previous experience running cities and towns, the infrastructure, mains, water mains, sewer mains, buildings, lights, no previous experience. No hands on experience of running a city and no previous experience except for my time in the military which was navy, not army, working directly with military commanders. This commander can't take that onboard. How could it be? Well, it could be because the organization that you work for for most of your adult career and mine is truly averse. The Department of State does not train or educate maybe to have this, but they don't train you up for operational duties. They assume you can pick it up because we're all so bright. We are so terribly, terribly, intelligent. We can do that without any extra care and we don't have enough people in our business to have surge capacity or the flow capacity to take

people off line, keep our positions filled and train. So, we are an enigma to the U.S. military, we are an enigma to the Pentagon. The Pentagon doesn't understand how we can operate this way. Neither do I. They're not wrong.

Q: Oh, I agree. Well, Bill, I'm going to stop at this point and I'll put at the end. I think we've got one more session to go. We'll come back to Brcko. We've already talked about your relations with the military; we've talked about the incidents of May and August of 1997 and how that helped the back, the August time, of some of the police side and so, but we will move on and what I would like to talk about your staff which is an international one and then talk about the other things; getting people to come back to Brcko and running the place and your relations with not only just the military, but with your group of foreign ministers who supposedly were supervisor and the State Department. So, we'll do that.

Today is the 18th of December, 2001. Bill, I'd like to add one note. I've been thinking about what we were talking about last night and you were talking about how unprepared you were and the State Department doesn't train its people and that you were thrown into this. At the same time, your diplomatic background and your understanding of the situation, the May Day situation when the people came, it was a messy situation where, the buses were being stoned, but if you hadn't let them come, it would have sent a very powerful signal that the Muslims are really, couldn't depend on you. I'm not sure that any training, particularly military training which is usually designed to avoid risk under the rules of the game and all, would have helped. So, I mean, whatever it was that you had picked up over the years or internalized, worked. I must say I was interviewing shortly thereafter, Bob Barry, who was I think heading OSCE in Sarajevo at the time and he said, "Well, you know Brcko had far more success in resettlement and other things and getting things done than other places. It was the most critical spot." I mean, whatever the background was, whatever it took, you did the right thing. So, let's go on. Your staff, you had this international staff, what were they doing and how effective were they?

FARRAND: In all of my diplomatic career, I have served in places where I think I'm accurate in saying this, only an American staff, either in an American embassy or back here in Washington, I never served at the United Nations, I didn't serve in multilateral organizations and therefore, this was the first time that I found myself in charge of a staff which I suppose at its outside was twenty-five professionals from, and I suppose, I counted them once, as many as eighteen countries. I'm not going to try to list them. The challenge of that, of course, after you've bumped around as long as I have, you have Stuart, you're right. There is a certain coming in to your experience a certain version a life's experience, of course, which is the primary thing. No amount of training could overcome someone who was not able to interact and work with people without and in keeping them on the side without these life skills, what you talk about. So, the multilateral staff was made up largely of, well, I had a senior military brigadier from the Royal Parachutes from the British army who was retired who was my senior deputy. He had an equivalent deputy who was a Russian ambassador actually; they do it that way. This man was of ambassadorial rank. I told you I think why I think that they both were assigned and we made jokes about it later because there was a concern on the part of Russia, particularly, that an American would come in and do harm in some way to the Bosnia Serbs that were occupying the town. So, I don't know where I'm going with this reply. Could you sharpen it a bit?

Q: Oh, yes. What types of things, were these people coming in not just to watch you, but did they have their own jobs? Wee they bringing expertise such as sewage education, electricity, I mean, what have you?

FARRAND: Right. I don't want to tell you they were only there to watch me. They were there for sure to give a balance to the administration of this highly combustible community where it was teetering on the edge. It had come out of a chaotic situation in the war and the feelings were raw. The ethnic and enmity between the three groups. That would be the Bosnian Croats, the Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnian Serbs was at top pitch. There is no question about that. They brought balance, they brought solidity, they helped me to explore other ways of doing things that I would not have thought of, they served occasionally as a break on my enthusiasm if I felt that yes, we ought to do this, they would say, "May we close the door and talk for a minute?" We would and we would go through it very carefully. I think one of the things I want to ease up on the State Department here. One of the things the Department did for me that I didn't realize until later. There was a course actually here at the Foreign Service Institute and I think the course was conducted up in the hills of West Virginia. I believe it had to do with supervisory management, and I believe I took it just before I became a deputy chief of mission. In fact, I think it's called the DCM course. That course was invaluable, not so much for what it did, not so much for the substance, but for the attitudinal approach. The way that the instructors who were down from Cambridge. They were contracting organizations, but they were from Cambridge and they said, they brought out you don't have to be the most brilliant person on your staff. You don't have to be the most accomplished person on your staff. You don't have to be the bravest person on your staff. You do have to, however, understand where those strengths and build on the strengths. If a person has a weakness, don't go crazy about that person's weakness if it can be gotten around when you are pushing forward on a complex mandate, a complex program as this was. That was an excellent. It changed my thinking. It really did because I probably was always a bit concerned that how can I deal with somebody who had steeped themselves in history of the Balkans, who has his Ph.D. on the Balkans? How can I deal with that? I know something about the Balkans, but certainly nothing like this. Yet, I had such people and we were able to build on those strengths. I guess I would have to say to you that I conducted an open shop, an open front office. I probably drove my people a little nuts by calling them in. I'm talking a German, a Swede, a Brit, a Russian, a Canadian, a Spaniard and English, by the way, was the language. I probably occasionally want to have a meeting tomorrow on the question that we have just discussed here at this staff meeting this morning. I don't want to conduct it right here because I have things to do today. I want to think about it and I want to get together with you, you, you, you and please come to my office and I would turn to my administrative assistant and say, "Please set this meeting up." They would come and we would sit and I would try to follow as best I could the reason for this meeting is the following or here's what I would like to come out of this meeting. I didn't always do it that way, but I tried to hone to that and I think, am I going where you want me to go? I think the, for me, the best result, the best outcome was a couple of times when a senior fellow on my staff and that's what would happen in the international community by the way, one has to be ready for this if one is going to get engaged in these type of hybrid operations than don't' fit within the bilateral diplomatic paragon. If you're going to get involved in this, you've got to recognize that these people may not come into this with the same enthusiasm that you have for getting the job done. They may, they may, but they look at it slightly differently because there is out there, which I hadn't known, I really hadn't known, but there is out there,

kind of a professional international community, I won't say worker, but a person who kind of goes from the crisis in Bosnia to the crisis in East Timor to the crisis in the Sudan or if there is one down in Namibia, they keep their ear tuned. There is a vast network of nongovernmental organizations that are tied to the governments, international organizations which are tied to governments and then, of course, the governments themselves. They're always looking for people and there is a whole cadre, cohort of people, if you will, out there ready to go different places depending on a number of factors, family, because lots of times they are more comfortable traveling away from their places for long periods of time. I had a number of British officers, by that I mean professionals, that were working with me that would go home and see their family every two and a half months and it was understood. It was accepted I think over there. The Brits have done that perhaps more than we. Anyway, because of their empire. The thing that I learned was that these folks, you can get working with them and then all of a sudden, they come and say to you, "By the way, boss I have an offer." I would say, "What is the offer?" They'd say, "Well, you know the problem in East Timor; you know the problems in Kosovo?" I'd say, "Yes?" "Well, I think I'm going off there." You can't say no, you can fluster a little bit, but you can't really say no. When they did, I had two people come back to me and say in one way I'm sorry I left because I've come into a, that's the person that left, is saying, I, the person that left, am in a situation now where the international community shuts down all internal communications because the person at the top has a closed way of operating. You did not. You did not. That they said to me and I felt good about that. It was part of the reason why we could make such progress there in Brcko. Over here in Mitusubishain or Kristina, there is no cross organization between agencies. I felt good about that. I had another person called me, too from Macedonia. He's working at that time for Catholic Relief Services, but now he's got a job with the international crisis group. He did this about four months ago. He lives in town and he called and said that he just wanted me to know that that style of management was an enormous assist to the program to the mission.

Q: Let's talk about first as you mentioned the Russian ambassador there was there more or less to see that you were working with the Serbs? Was there a problem? You're trying to put this together, yet it's the Serbs who are being the bullyboys. You know, in a lot of cases they weren't being the bullyboys, they were just Serbs. Did you find that you had to watch yourself and your team not to be beastly to the Serbs as opposed to the Croats and Muslims?

FARRAND: You know, there might be something to be said for bringing somebody like me onto the scene who had not been immersed in it and had not been there during the war and had not seen some of the atrocious acts and I'm going to say by the Serbs against the non-Serbs, however, once the thing got rolling of course, then there is going to be some tit for tat. Well, the tit for tat, this particular round of the never ending round of Balkan conflicts that seems to go back for some time. This one you've got to lay in the hands of the Serbs, you've got to, Milosevic. The Serbians, I'm not going to say the Bosnian Serbs, I'm going to say the Serbians. Look, the situation was such that the municipality, they called it, the town had 85,000 people before the war. Well, probably, I don't how many, 1,000 were killed, just killed. They were non-Serbs, non-Bosnian Serbs and were driven away, some driven out of the country, some driven into the country, but the place was all Serb when I got there. Now, what am I going to do? Poke a sharp stick in the eye of everybody I talk to and just say I want you all to know that I find you all morally repugnant. As far as I am concerned you should be categorized with animals, we ought

to treat you like that. No, you can't do that; you can't do that because they're pretty punch drunk, too at this point. Punch drunk from the war, punch drunk from all the pressures they're getting internally and not well.

Q: How did you go about the resettlement process? What did you see as your objective and what did you do?

FARRAND: Yes. The people back here in Washington that I had to go around and see in a blur of one on one meetings with people, over at NSC, certainly at many offices at State, out to the agency, out to the Pentagon, all wanted to know the answer to that question. What do you see as your goal? How many people you going to get back? Well, I never was on the ground. I hadn't followed in any great detail the war. I was learning fast about what happened, but I was behind the curve all the way. I, therefore, could not say look I think it's going to be possible to bring back within a year x number of people. Although with one man I did, his name was, he was a special representative over at the White House sitting in the State Department. His name is Sklaar. He said, "How many do you think?" I said, "7,000." He looked at me and his jaw dropped. He said, "Well, if you can do that, you'll be a hero." So, I figured I just took the number out of the air, 7,000 people, not families, families would be times four, would be 28,000. No, no, no. Just 7,000 I said. So, I tested the waters. I plucked that out of the air, but I remembered it. When I reached 7,000 when the numbers got up to 7,000 I don't think it was done in a year. Surely it was not, but I think by the end of the second year I was hitting in those numbers and then it began. It was a tumble down effect. You had to, the fear was palpable, the hostility was palpable and you had to devise a plan which was laid on me to do although I had a great deal of help in this from the high representative himself personally, Carl Bildt and from the head of the United Nations high commission for refugees that sat in Geneva, came all the way in to number two. Not Ogata, Madame Ogata, but her number two came in. Lawyers and others came in and we sat around and jawboned for a couple of days, three days, coming up with a plan to bring people back which was the primary right under the Dayton Peace Accord, the primary right under the Dayton Peace Accord, stated, "All persons shall have the right freely to return to their homes of origin." Freely to return to their homes of origins. Now, of course, it was laid on the parties, not on the international treaty, on the parties to make that work. Well, we went about it very carefully in the beginning because there was going to be no receptivity to any of it at all, none, no receptivity. Serbs would say that. We'll never have them back. They use a pejorative. The pejorative that the Bosnian Serbs used to describe the Bosnian Muslims was Turk. That was the lowest word you could use. We'll never have the Turks back. You had to chew away at that. Of course, the Bosnian Muslims were saying, "Okay, you big man, you have all the powers. It states right in the final award that all rules or orders and regulations laid down by the supervisor shall prevail as against any conflicting law, any conflicting law." The seeds of that statement were built a sure fire problem with the office of the high representative; you can see that can't you? That began to grow as the initial period of enthusiasm. As we began to make some progress, then that power which was pretty broad began to come up against the power of the high representative, that was the problem.

Q: How do you convince, how did you sort of get the trickle going?

FARRAND: Right, right. What we did, I think I said in an earlier session, that the ceasefire line

which was a real battle line, it was not politically drawn through the Brcko municipality. The word for cognoscenti is opstina. That line, all around the country, was about a thousand kilometers long, plus or minus a couple of kilometers, I don't know. Under the Dayton Agreement, two kilometers north of it and two kilometers south of it. Well, two kilometers either side of it was the area in which the stabilization force, S4 was given total authority to keep out all, any kind of military activity of any sort. It went through the Brcko area, about forty kilometers east west and S4 controlled, because we had a major battalion there, three hundred troops; S4 controlled that strip of land. Four kilometers wide, forty kilometers long. Now, that kind of real estate is going to have within it some villages and indeed, right near where we were there were about three, two for sure, Muslim villages that had been destroyed and emptied out by the Serbs. It worked out that those villages fell within this four kilometer strip centered on the interentity boundary line, which was the ceasefire line, the IEBL. Right on that line, so that what we did, we started to put out feelers that people could come back to those villages and they bought it, why not? Because S4 controlled it. They were going to come under the mantel of S4's protection. Now, S4 was not a police force, but so long as S4 had total control over that strip, then the people would come back in. So, we started very delicately, sensitively bringing a few back in there. Then we started working off the line. Marginal.

Q: How did S4 feel about these people coming in?

FARRAND: Well, S4, that's a good question. They felt good about it, but they didn't want to be responsible for it. In other words, if there was going to be a fight breaking out between the two factions if it happened, they didn't want to have to be in a position to protect those people's lives, oh property, sorry, property. Lives yes, but not property. Well, when you're reestablishing a village, when you're building up a village, you're talking about property. You're talking about restoring property to its previous owners. So, S4 was under technically speaking, this was not S4's job, but S4 was very interested in getting out of Bosnia and one way of getting out of Bosnia is to get the people back to their homes and get life back to the way it is which is the standard intelligent way to go about things. That wasn't what was written into the mandate, not quite the same way. S4 always did state that after its first mission, which was to protect its soldiers, force protection, that's the first mission. The second mission was to get people back to their homes.

Q: What about houses and property either side of the line because you're saying this is a Serb dominated area? In the first place, who were these people? Were they Croatians or Muslims or both was it preponderates of one of those groups coming?

FARRAND: The preponderates were the Muslims returning. Before the war the Muslims had been up forty-five to fifty percent of the population and after the war, and the Serbs only twenty percent. The Croats were in there with twenty-five percent. So, you had Muslim Bosnian Croats, and Bosnian Muslims, which made up something on the order of seventy percent of the population of Brcko. After the war, the city had been ethnically cleansed and it's loaded with Serbs. So, this was, these Serbs were internally displaced from all over Bosnia, all over Bosnia, the far south, all over the place, they were jammed in there by Karagig and his henchmen.

Q: When you started moving away from the neutral zone, what happened? I know from my

experience of just hearing about it when I was in Derventa and I went over to Vanaluka and I know that every time they would try and build something, some jolly boys would show up and dynamite and blow it up again. This was about the same time you were doing this I think.

FARRAND: Probably.

Q: So, what was happening with you all?

FARRAND: Well, I had this British retired brigadier. His name was Ian McCloud. He was a great fellow. He had a lot of experience in Northern Ireland, which is a great benefit to us, actually. Sometimes he would say when we would be having some trouble; "This is a quiet night in Belfast." He would also say, he had one saying that I wrote down, "You only have setbacks. You're never defeated until you quit. Setbacks, yes, you get setbacks, but you're never defeated." So no matter what we did, we would encourage the people, that would be the Muslims if they were coming back to get up, brush themselves off and start again and then we for our part would start again. We never got set back. Set back, yes, but not. We weren't going to take these things as the final word because of course, that's what they wanted?

Q: What did you do about the bullyboys with the dynamite?

FARRAND: For one thing, they were all cowards. They only do these things at night. They didn't have dynamite per se; they would have grenades or LPGs. There was no electricity; there were no lights in the city. We had lights. There were lights in the city and there was some electricity, but it was about a third of what you had had before the war. Now, out in the regions around the town, three and four kilometers out were all this reconstruction we were trying to get going. This is where the mischief would happen. There were no lights out there. So, you had this problem that would take place mostly at night. These people did not have generators, these portable generators. No. So, we had to get electricity going. What you had to do was to shine light on the issue, you had to shine light on the issue. We fooled around on a couple of ideas. One idea, which didn't go anywhere, it did go somewhere, but it wasn't a good idea. Yet, I agreed with it. The idea was to get some towers and to bring towers in that would be a hundred feet in the air, if you could get a little higher that would be better and put policemen up there with heat seeking lights, infrared type optical things. Big lights. Actually we got along, people were willing to do it, they found a couple of towers, they brought them up by helicopter, we implanted them, but then the police, that would be the western police, the International Police Task Force didn't want to be up there. You can see why.

Q: They'd be targets.

FARRAND: They'd be sitting ducks. Had we thought of that? No. They didn't want to go up there. So, it didn't work. We left them there for a couple of months and eventually we took them away. That was something that didn't work. One thing that did work, however, I think in time it worked. I went out to see the base commander, the lieutenant commander, the lieutenant colonel, I'm sorry, I'm an ex-navy man, lieutenant colonel. I said to him, "Look, I know your mandate, I know you're not supposed to protect people, but one of the things." I'm sorry, you do protect people when their lives are in danger, but you don't protect property. So, let me correct what I

just said. I said to him, “Your mandate is that you are not paid to protect property.” He said, “That’s correct.” I said, “Well, look, on the way up from your base to the heart of town and you start right on the IEBL, and it’s only about four kilometers up to town, you go through some rugged territory. You go basically through one road, one pockmarked, potholed, mess of a joke of a road and as you come up that road, that is your patrol. Then you get into town and you patrol on the streets and then you go back, put your people to bed and another patrol comes out and you do this around the clock, right?” “Right.” I said, “But you know, some of the regions in which we are reconstructing is off to the side of that main road, maybe a kilometer over here, maybe a kilometer over here.” This is in the beginning stages, we’re just probing, but I said, “They’re having this difficulty at night. Would there be any chance with your people, as they come up the road that they could take a side tour? In other words, they’re headed from the camp to the town to start their patrols, could they start out ten minutes early, rumble up the road, rumble off to the side, rumble down into some of these little areas, rumble around, rumble around, come back out on the main road and then come on up and do that on a irregular basis, on a random basis?” He thought about it, “We can do that,” he said. I said, “I’m not asking you to get out, I’m not asking you to put troops around the particular houses that had their roofs destroyed, or anything of that nature. I’m just asking you to rumble by, just rumble by. You don’t have to do anymore than that.” He was amenable to that. We never asked Washington because if you had they would have said no, the Pentagon. Without any fuss he did it and it had a salutary effect of suppressing some of this arbitrary random violence just because the troops were rumbling around. Of course, they had lights on their machines; they could see where they were going. It was quite evident there’s guys up there still going around with their fifty caliber.

Q: Did the international police and eventually the Brcko local police begin to control the sort of hoodlum element and the bullyboy element?

FARRAND: You never knew. In the early days there, I’m talking the first I’m going to say the first seven or eight months, you never knew whether the police or the bullyboys were different. You never knew. The police were virtually all Serb and, as I said, our estimate was, we would try to get a number fixed on them, but we couldn’t get a real fix, but our estimate was after we had our IPTF, we had two hundred fifty IPTF guys there from about twenty countries. They had this marvelous commander from Santa Fe, New Mexico and he did a careful look at it. He said, “I think there's about five hundred of them.” But they’re not trained as policemen; some of them are nothing but paramilitary fighters during the war, just paramilitary. All they did was put on a uniform, and it’s not even a uniform, it’s a combat type uniform. They slouched around town. They drank coffee and basically protected the party, protected the Serb Orthodox party. When I say Orthodox, I mean hard line. That was their particular function. We had to get rid of them and we did. By the end of the year, after we had had elections. Once we had elections, which took place in September of ‘97; I got there in April and in September of ‘97, once we’d had elections we could then once the elections took place we could then get ratios. This was anathema back here in the United States, but that’s what we had to do. We took ratios. How many Bosnian Serbs were elected? How many Bosnian Croats and how many Bosnian Muslims were elected? We took ratios. On the basis of that ratio, that’s how we formed our police force. That’s how we formed our police force on that ratio. We got rid of roughly half of the police so-called police; got rid of half of them. The other half we had them all take tests and we opened it up to others who wished to come in and those who didn’t pass the tests were dumped and then those who did

pass the test were put through training, even, are you ready for this? Human rights, lectures and we impressed upon them that they were to be a professional police force and that's what they were to do. We made our patrols dual ethnic. It worked out that the number was two hundred thirty, that's what we cut them down to, two thirty. It worked out that the ratios left us with the following out of the two hundred thirty, one hundred twenty were Serbs, Bosnian Serbs, ninety were Bosniacs or Bosnian Muslims, and twenty only were Croat, Bosnian Croats. That was our police force. You saw the ninety and the twenty is one hundred and ten, it doesn't really match the one hundred twenty here, but it was such that we could have no Serb out on patrol unless he had somebody that was not a Serb with him on patrol. You would have thought that there was going and there was in the beginning, when we put this in place on the first of January 1988 and I addressed them all. I addressed them all. I called them over to the office. We had a great big room and I addressed them and I was kind of impressed that I didn't see on their face this look of surliness that I expected. It might have been in their hearts, but I didn't see it on their faces. I was kind of really pessimistic that this was going to work, but because of the way that the IPTF went about it and because we stayed with it and wouldn't let it go, and we had one or two officers on my staff, one of them was a Brit, a young man, very bright, who had served in the Cold Stream Guards, was a young man. He went out and he took a special interest in this. We had civilian and the UN staff, too. This was kind of a complex interweaving and if I could put in a plug again, this would be where I would see State getting serious about introducing persons that the State Department wished to send into situations like this. I know a little bit about the perplexity of the international structure. Your own structure, that would be good and then they don't do that very well. You pick it up. They expect you to pick it up.

Q: Did you find that as you introduced these bipolar patrols or whatever you want to call them, did you find that they were beginning to get professional and stop you know, people from messing around at night and all that?

FARRAND: The quick answer is yes, the quick answer is yes. It didn't mean that there weren't significant, there wasn't a significant amount of trouble along the way. The professionalization of the police would be if I had to leave one thing for whoever looks at this down the road wherever, would be the professionalization of the police and the multiethnicization is probably one of the very first things you need to do if you ever, ever expect to get out of that community. I think that's going to have to happen in the Middle East. I won't get off on that. I think they're going to certainly have to do it in Afghanistan. It's going to be hard, but you've got to do it and you have to take time and think it all through. The devil is in the details. But, yes, they did start acting professionally.

Q: Particularly the Bosniacs who were coming back, one thinks of these flattened houses, what did they come back to and how did they settle in?

FARRAND: Sure. Okay. The United States army has a, what is it called, call it a regiment. It's probably not a regiment, but it's a large organization of persons who are civil affairs officers. Now what does that mean? That means that you can bring back in time of crisis from the civilian world, reservists, reservists put them into uniform and depending on their expertise and private life, utilize them as advisors and assist in many, many different ways in a conflict zone. The U.S. army in the course of my three and a quarter years there provided me with at least eleven or

maybe twelve of these people. They came with me for ten months. One of them in the very opening days was a Ph.D. in systems analysis out of Florida. Someday I'll look up his name. It's Jim, but I can't remember his last name. A man of quiet competence and I said to him, "Jim, we and I don't know how to do, I don't know how to do it, I don't what to do, but we need because my people are advising me that we need it, we need a systems approach to all of these destroyed houses. We need to know, we need somehow to find a way of marking all of these destroyed houses because they're all sitting on pieces of property. Now, it's all a jumble and a blur." One thing the Serbs did before they left was to take all the street signs and the road signs and take them all, take them all away. They wanted nobody back ever, this was meant to be the final thing; you will never come back. This is all destroyed; you will never come back. You won't even know where you are when you do come back because all the street signs have been moved away, all of the road signs, anything that would identify. "So, would it be possible, Jim?" He said, "Got you covered?" You don't need to. He went down to the bowels of this building of mine, ours and he sat with another highly competent civil affairs officer who, let's see, am I getting this? Well, anyway, he worked out a system so that he went out into using the Cadastre records. Do you know the word Cadastre?

Q: Yes, the town records.

FARRAND: Yes, the town records. They're using the Cadastre records, which curiously enough, the Serbs had not destroyed. They're were a bit like the Germans in the Second World War, they kept all their records because they were compulsive and obsessive about record keeping. Well, the Serbs had not destroyed this and even if they had, there was a juadetic survey in Sarajevo, which had a microfilm of all property records throughout Bosnia. We could have always backed that up if we had to. So, what we did is, we went downtown. I'm sorry, yes; we went downtown, worked with the Cadastre records and then using a relatively simple marketing system. I forget how it went, but I think it was, let's say it was red paint with a number, red paint. That meant Bosniac or green paint meant Bosniac, red paint meant Serb and blue meant Croat. The numbers were put on. We had this huge grid and I also asked, he asked me and I arranged with the general to go up in the helicopter and spend about an hour and a half and I did. They had, they brought their best cameras down and we took overhead cameras, click, click, click, and put them in grids. By the time we were done, we had a pretty decent way of telling Mohammed and his wife, Admirer and their five children, that piece of rubble is yours, if Mohammed wished to tell where he was before the war. So, it was painstaking and it always is, but that's how we did it. I don't know if that's responsive to your question.

Q: Where did you get building materials?

FARRAND: The House of Said.

Q: All right, Saudi Arabia.

FARRAND: The House of Said.

Q: This is obviously for the Bosniacs?

FARRAND: Right. They were the ones, they ere the ones that were in the plurality before the war.

Q: Were there problems with Serb families that had been displaced somewhere else moving in and taking over a Croatian or Muslim house?

FARRAND: Sure, sure, all over the place. Sure. That was the problem. So, then the question is, you see because the combustibility of the situation was. What we decided, Stu, essentially was we're first going to establish the principle that people can come back. They're going to come back to destroyed and unoccupied homes first. Then we're going to run that out as long as we can. Before we take on the real tough nut of having to start coming into areas where Serbs are living in non-Serb homes. We had to play. We were playing, what's the word? I was playing a short game, not a long game. The short game that I was playing I was getting ready for the long game. You had to first establish these people coming back. They are coming back. You could do this or you could do that, you Serbs, but they're coming. Now, the Serbs did not view their return as a humanitarian or a legal issues. The Serbs viewed their return in strategic military delight. If you've ever seen a military map of how a battle envelops and these big arrows, these big flat headed arrows, coming here and here; that's how they saw it. We had to be aware; those of us, you always had to pull your head up. You always had to remind, I certainly did, that this is not a technical issue, only to mark hole houses only so you can bring Mohammad and his wife, Admira, and his six children back to a house. Yes, that's the goal, but getting all of that in place means that you've got to have some basic things there. You're going to have to have, he's going to have to have a small stove of some sort, he's going to have to have some plastics for the windows so the winds don't blow in while he's trying to rebuild the walls and put the roof on again, all this other stuff. But, you can get lost in that and as Ian McCloud used to say, "You can get up so close to the cold face that you don't see the scene." You've got to pull back and say the Serbs are doing all of this. Uh, oh, here comes, here, here. They're putting all together in their minds in this vast conspiracy theory which wasn't very clever as a conspiracy theory that it was all a threat to them. They realized that as it happened in some future point, their ability to stay in the homes that were not theirs was going to be challenged. You kept working, working with them, talking, talking, being as open and transparent as possible. I had stated on the very first day you will recall the last time when I said my first speech on the steps of the Brcko's supervisor's office. Carl Bildt was there and he and his people had drafted the speech and then I changed the speech a little bit to suit my own style. One of the things that was in the speech was this statement to the Serbs because that's who I'm talking to in the downtown area on the opening day. "You will not be thrown out on the street if you have nowhere else to go." That was my fundamental contract. Wasn't even a contract, it was a one-sided assurance to them. We had thought this thing through because what was their sensitivity about my coming? Their sensitivity is "what's going to happen to us?" Are they going to have bayonets coming at us in the middle of the night? We had to calm them down and that did more, that one statement, did more to establish a certain basis at least some basis to go forward. Without that, I would have been deep kim chi and I must have repeated that over the course of the next year or two. Perhaps oh I don't know probably two dozen times in public statements.

Q: Where did you find the alternate housing?

FARRAND: There really wasn't any. I tried hard to persuade the international community, the givers, that would be the European Commission, the European Union and some bilateral governments as well that I needed buffer housing, buffer housing that would permit me to have a series of housing units that would be used as pass through units. For example, if Mohammed to the south of the line is coming back to take over, I'm going to try and think of a good Serb name. Anyway, Petar's house. Petar and his wife and two children are living in Mohammad's house in the heart of Brcko town. Mohammad wants to come back, but Petar has no place to go so if I had some housing units, maybe sixty, maybe a hundred. I could move Petar to those housing units under an agreement with Petar that as soon as we were to find permanent ongoing housing for him that he would leave these quarters. That would put a time limit on it, too. Then Mohammad could come back up and go into his home which is Petar is now living in the buffer quarters. Then, when you get about the business of trying to find a community in the south where Petar had lived before to see whether his house down there couldn't be vacated. Now, to vacate his house of course, down there, you're going to put a Bosniac out because that's what was happening in Sarajevo. Bosniacs were living in Serb houses and if you were over in Mustar, which was the Croat area, you had that other combination going. It was constipated. It was absolutely constipated. How to administer a little tablespoon of mineral oil to start the ball rolling very, very. This was the challenge that we faced all the time.

Q: Did you find as you were beginning to put this together, was entrepreneurship beginning to develop? I'm thinking about you know, housing, masons and people who could build a little and the shops and things like that. Were you finding a community developing?

FARRAND: It came very slowly, but the people of the Balkans, most men are adept, are adept at things which a lot of people in this country are not anymore.

Q: They can build.

FARRAND: They can build. They can build. The construction of their houses, they do not use wood. They only use masonry and it's a particular type of masonry. So, you learn how to stack, stack, stack, mortar stack, stack, and you leave space for windows and almost all the houses are identical. Once you learn how to build one, you can build another. There are people that are good at putting on roofs, tile roofs, there are people among that group that can do that better, so there was a division of labor and there was a certain flowering of the comparative advantage, a little bit. What we were trying to do in the beginning was to bring the families, we didn't want to flood the area, you couldn't flood the area. If we flooded the area we were going to trigger a violent response. We tried to bring them back and I urged everybody when they were thinking about this and I didn't micromanage to bring them back in groups of twenty or twenty-five families. Twenty families. Bring them back to the same section, the same section and let them all come back to the same section. Because there's twenty families they can provide a modicum of security for each other if they are in the same rough area. A modicum. They can't do it, but they can provide a modicum. Some of the people always said, "Well, what if somebody tries to steal somebody else's property?" Well, I mean, the records aren't so great. The only thing that he has to show from before the war is a utility bill, an electricity bill that's torn on the top. His name is there and the address and it shows that for the month of I don't know, July 1984, that he paid the electricity bill at that piece of property. They stripped him of his ID cards. That's the one

beautiful thing that the Serbs did, they did it in Kosovo you saw it. They took away everything, they stripped a person of every single piece of identity. They stripped them of all their legal documents. This was, well, forget about that. When that Muslim comes up in front of the board, which we established, he had to show that he could get, that he as closely as he could that he owned that piece of land. A lot of doubts rose up. What happens if they get there and he's an imposter and he's taking somebody else's land because the records aren't so hot? Well, we thought that one through pretty thoroughly and we determined that if we brought them back in clumps, of a couple of dozen families here and a couple dozen over there. These people are not like Americans. There is no real estate market in Bosnia, no effective real estate market, Century 21, none of that. People are born on a piece of land and they live on that land. The father and their grandfather lived there before. Yes, maybe they could work out a transfer, but it would probably be a crude transfer, one on one worked out between them. It's not a sophisticated real estate market. So, there's a great deal of stability in the neighborhoods or was until the war. Now, that means if you put twenty-four families in and there's one ringer in they're trying to take somebody else's property, he's going to stand out like a sore thumb. Everybody's going to say, "Hey, we've never seen you before, who are you?" At that point it never happened. Never did I have any trouble with that, maybe once.

Q: Well, now what did these families, all the families including the Serbs that were there, what were they doing in order to reestablish a normal life regarding work and generating money and all that?

FARRAND: Well that, of course, is the $64,000 question. You can bring people back, but if they don't have jobs or if they don't have a way of making a living, what in God's name is going to happen to them and what is going to happen to you and your program? Well, we couldn't solve every problem all at once, but I can assure you that my eye was never far off the economic scene. Because to draw back just a little bit, there was no template for how to do this, there was no book I could go to. There was no, in fact, maybe that's what I'm writing now, what I'm trying to write now, some practical thoughts on all of this. It's complex because we were moving on all fronts at once. I didn't have the luxury of only dealing with returned people and then later dealing with the economy and then later dealing with reestablishing the court of law and the police, first the police, and then getting the freedom of movement going and then, you know, I didn't have the luxury. I had to move on several tracks at once and the tracks were not totally separate, they were in fact interwoven. Jobs, education, schools, the churches, the mosques, getting the market downtown up.

Q: Electricity, water, and sewage.

FARRAND: Water, sewage, electricity and emergency services. In Mosloff's Hierarchy of Need, you're right down there at the bottom. Food, shelter, water and clothing. This is not the time to bring in the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra to make them feel good at night. I mean, maybe they weren't feeling good, but you don't want to put your efforts on that, let's get them fed and clothed first. So, but there was a considerable reliance in my mind on the concept that if people could be gotten back to their homes they would calm down, their anxieties would be reduced and their energies would be totally taken up with clearing the rubble and starting again. Then go to bed at night tired. Not so anxious to go downtown and mix it up with the Malamute Saloon,

something like that.

Q: How much support were you getting from this, I don't know what you call it, consortium of all these European nations?

FARRAND: Peace Implementation Council?

Q: Yes, they baited you and talked you into this. What were you getting from them?

FARRAND: Not very much. The problem of Brcko, because it was in the north, northern sector which was the American sector and because it was an outgrowth of the peace talks at Dayton, Ohio, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, and because they had placed Brcko under an arbitral tribunal and the person named to be the presiding arbitrator was an American and because when the time came for him to say we can't do it without on scene supervision, they selected an American. The Europeans were quite anxious. They were not willing to take on too much at Brcko. This was an American problem, the Americans want it, the Americans have got it. Well, the Americans didn't want it in that way, the Americans were anxious to set up a proper structure so that we could resolve this issue if it was resolvable. The Europeans, you had a problem there. There was no particular separate line item in the Peace Implementation Council's budget for Brcko and that was a problem I had to fight all the way.

Q: Until you can establish commerce and all, there must, I mean you need, how were you feeding the people, how were you getting supplies?

FARRAND: When I got there, before I got there USAID had been very forthcoming with cooking oil, baking flour, and sugar, raw sugar. I think that's right, but certainly cooking oil. There were huge tin cans piled inside of old gutted buildings. The whole dang thing would be piled up with USAID hand clasps and then these things had been opened and they'd poured out the oil and I guess they mixed it with the flour and they made bread or they made something. I don't know what you do. I'm not a cook, so I don't know how much cooking oil, but there was great evidence that that had been distributed. Who else? I can't really point to any particular country besides us that was coming in with food.

Q: How about Serbia itself, were they cranking anything in?

FARRAND: Only small items, which I cannot identify that would be totally unhelpful to the peace process to prop up or keep in place the Karagig part, which is the Serb democratic party which was founded by Karagig.

Q: This is a Poly group?

FARRAND: Yes, Poly which is outside of Sarajevo up in the mountains in the Republic of Serbska. The party was known as the Serb Democratic Party, which in the Serb language is SDS. So, if I refer to SDS, it's the tough guys. They're still in power over there. They're still driving people nuts.

Q: Around the time you ere there and when I was in Germany and I guess it was the September election out of Derventa.

FARRAND: Were you there in '97 September?

Q: Yes.

FARRAND: Yes, that was the election.

Q: But I was rather surprised seeing how things, commerce was coming back, the farms looked pretty good, better than the Soviets blown up buildings. Things were moving and just outside they had some very large fish farms which was sort of an innovation which I'd never seen before when I had been in Yugoslavia thirty years before. Was any of this sort of showing itself in Brcko?

FARRAND: No, not at this time. What you had mostly in Brcko, between Derventa and Brcko, closer to Brcko, than Derventa, was a colony a little enclave, two enclaves really of Croats up on the boarder on the Sava River which was the border with Croatia which you were up another sixty kilometers up to the east. I'm sorry to the west, to the northwest; you were up, up, further. If you had come up to these enclaves and there was a bridge had been taken out, but they had a big ferry. That ferry was in operation connecting up a road called by the American soldiers, the Arizona Highway. Down where the Arizona Highway connected with the interentity boundary line, roughly interentity boundary line goes east west and the Arizona Highway runs from the Sava River down to Sarajevo north south where they intersect tat the interentity boundary line. A colonel in the U.S. army, Fantouno and his lieutenant colonel who was in charge of the battalion that was right there near Brcko, Camp McGovern, a fellow by the name of Tony Cuckulo. Fantouno and Cuckulo decided that it would be a good idea to establish a little place where people could exchange goods, not money, because they had different currencies. They could exchange goods across and maybe that would be a way of getting them to start to talk to each other. So, they did and they set it up under U.S. army auspices and they had it protected by a tank right on that road and they just lent them their own little stalls. Little wooden stalls. That became known, that worked. In fact it was one of those ideas which was a good idea at the time, but it didn't have any program beyond that. It began to grow and grow and grow and grow and became a huge cancer of smuggled goods and black market and whorehouses and no administration. That was going to be a problem for me and it was a problem for me and it became a sore point. One of the major different points. I would differ with Bob Barry for example on what should have been done there and is being done. What I was going to do is being done now, but it took a year and we lost a lot of revenue. That is one of the economic impulses, it wasn't a totally healthy one, but it was an economic impulse. The difficulty, Brcko had about twenty-six factories before the war ranging from the production of vegetable oil to shoes to automobile batteries to, what was the other major one. Well, the processing of meat, big meat processing place, then several others that were of a smaller size. All of these factors had been largely gutted or damaged and not maintained and the machinery not maintained or stripped and taken to Belgrade by the Serbians. All that had to be gotten going again, but you can't get those things going on until you have your law on property in place, your law on contracts in place, your law on commerce, commercial code and all of that requires a multiethnic legislature and it was mostly Serb at the time and it's

all interwoven.

Q: While you were doing this the three years you were there, was the Serbska Republica legislature putting together a working system, legal system that you know would help things develop?

FARRAND: No, no, no. They had no program. It took me time to realize this. Your question is a good one, but it took me time to realize that they had no program. Their basic strategy was to obstruct, delay, and frustrate the international community in every way so that it would be impossible to bring people back and to do whatever you could to undermine without being overly negative. I mean, you could smile at the supervisor and tell him one thing one night and change it the next after Poly had placed a telephone call to them or you would place a telephone call to Poly. So, no the answer is no. They were incapable of coming up with a coherent plan for the redevelopment of their community.

Q: You left there when?

FARRAND: 31st of May, 2000.

Q: When you left there, what had been done and what hadn't been done?

FARRAND: By the time I left we were evicting people, we were evicting the Serb families from the non-Serb houses they were occupying in the heart of town at the rate of two to three a week. We had set up a board to look over these applications very carefully. We had tackled the very first thing that we tackled, when we had to come down to hitting the hard nut of the town and we were going to do some evictions. The first thing we looked at was persons who- (end of tape)

Q: You had said you were working to get the double occupiers out.

FARRAND: Okay, okay. It just follows along, that what you do it would seem to me in a circumstance like we were in, when I think back on it I was really following a strategy of bringing people back to homes to their properties, first destroyed and unoccupied and then destroyed and then partially occupied and then when we got up to the heart of town, we were always going for the low hanging one first. We would take what was easiest to get first. Gradually nibble it down. This never made the Bosniacs happy. In fact, at the end they were attacking me for doing nothing. They just wanted to make a smear campaign against me at the end. This was because of a particular decision I had made about the composition of the interim assembly. That would be the legislature. At the time I had made a decision that didn't please one man and then he launched a smear campaign. We took first the people. For example, there would be a Serb because he was in a position of authority and influence. He would take over a very nice house and it was a very nice Bosniac, Muslim house. Then he would go down the street and see a nice Croat house and take over that and he'd live in both. He'd have his son, twenty-four year old son and their daughter in this house and he and his wife in this house. Plus, out in the country would be his Serb house toward Bevra. He had three houses. It worked out that all they would never say it, there were a lot of Serbs who were very unhappy with that circumstance and would be quite happy to see this man taken down a peg. Now, they're not going to say it, but internally

they're not going to give you any trouble. So, it was a win-win situation. We set up a board, it was a multiethnic board and we oversaw it and we brought these cases and they would be discussed in front of this board and then determination was great. Yes, you have three houses; well you can only have one house under the law; so many square feet per person. Therefore, you're going to have to divest yourself of a couple of houses and the choice is yours. It's going to be a matter of time. What really happened, Stu, as this got going, this was a way of delaying the really hard problem of evicting that Serb who, this was the only house he had because there was nothing for him. If he lived before the war down in Sarajevo, if he had lived in another town, there was nothing for them there. He was huddling down, hunkering down and we were going to get to him eventually, but we're taking this. That's satisfying first of all, the numbers are getting better and gradually as we do these evictions and what happened the man that had three houses, many of these people, most of these people are honorable people. They go home and they say this isn't right, I never felt right about anyway. So, we're going to have to give it up. They would come in and hand the keys in without having the eviction forces to come. We got along a great way, that way. I would say that today the process has really opened up and its moving quite rapidly and families are coming back to their homes today. I just was over there about four weeks ago, six weeks and it seems to be going quite well. Now, so that was what we did there. Now, what other things did we do? Well, freedom of movement was restored within a year. By my first twelve months their people could pretty much come back up into town without having to get harassed. They didn't worry about it too much. Maybe the first fifteen months.

Q: They changed the license plates, too, didn't they?

FARRAND: They did and that was done down in Sarajevo at the idea of a fellow from New Zealand who had worked for the United Nations. He came up with this idea because we've got thirty-two characters in the Serb [alphabet] and you've got twenty-eight, twenty-six characters, in the Latanic and when you bring them together, there are ten of them, which are identical. O is identical, H, now H is "huh," in Latanic it's "umh," but it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter, it's still an H. You don't know what it is, so you put NH2345. Actually what they did is to put that letter in the middle, three numbers on the right, three numbers on the left and it gave you a huge array.

Q: Prior to that I mean in the old communist Yugoslavia, the license plates told you where somebody was from. I had, a BG meant it was Belgrade, SA was Sarajevo. This, of course, was an identifier for somebody who hated somebody from one of these places and so by making the numbers no longer correlate to place, it meant that people were no longer identified as being from the wrong area so they could move around.

FARRAND: That's very true, but in Brcko we had, that helped, but we had largely reestablished freedom of movement before this new license plate came in. The license plate was the cream on the cake, but we had largely reestablished it. The police were enforcing it. One thing that the communist police always did, the Soviet Union, all places, Czechoslovakia, Poland was they policed by the little popsicle sticks, the checkpoint. They would pull people over and stop them and "Let me see your papers, let me see your documents." Then check, check, check, check and then probably take a little money on the side if they found something. We attached that checkpoint policy and got rid of it. We made it to the point that they could not have checkpoints.

They could only have a checkpoint if they went to the International Police Task Force and got the commander to say you can have one, but you can only have it for thirty minutes and you can only have it tomorrow night between the hours of 9:00 and 12:00 and no more. By getting rid of that you see, that starts the flow, even with the different license places. You're absolutely right, the guy who thought this up was really bright.

Q: We talked about the resettlement, the movement and by the time you left, the tasks that you'd been given which seemed almost impossible had taken hold?

FARRAND: We had the elections in cooperation with, Barry wasn't there at the time, his predecessor, Bob Frolick. We had elections on the basis of the elections we established a multiethnic police and assembly. We downsized the government just like Fiat; we set up a law revision commission to harmonize the laws. We set up a neutral district, de-militarized. This was because of the arbitrator. That was the way he was deciding things and were carrying it out on the ground. Brcko did go a long way.

Q: How about your relations with the State Department and with Sitban first and Sarajevo second? Were you more or less I mean did they bother you much, look over your shoulder?

FARRAND: State passed from a hands on group in the beginning in the first year, a hands on group that was very, very concerned. They told me when I go out, you get Brcko right and we'll have a chance for the Dayton Peace process in Bosnia. If you don't get Brcko right, the peace process in Bosnia is in real trouble. Brcko is the key. So, I operated under that presumption and nobody ever changed, but the people in Washington began to change. They changed and Kosovo happened. When Kosovo happened it was right near the presidential elections. They didn't want any bumping up of trouble in Kosovo so they brought a new envoy in after Gelpart. Gelpart was always; he's a man that wants to be in charge of everything. He's very territorial, but he's smart as a whip and he understood the importance of Brcko. We had our differences he and I, but we got over them. I hope he got comfortable with me, I was reasonably comfortable with him and I could call on him for what I called top cover when I was getting heat because the Europeans never liked the Brcko concept, you see. We were moving faster, we were getting things done and the office of the high representative went from Bildt to a Spaniard to an Austrian. From Bildt, a Swedish prime minister to a Spaniard ex-foreign minister, to an Austrian ex-ambassador.

Q: They're going down?

FARRAND: In my judgment, but up in petty fogging and bureaucratism. So, at the end I will have to say that my relations with the high representative's office in Sarajevo were a big, total and I have my story to tell on that, they have their story to tell, too. I think I was that I wasn't dealt with straight. I didn't get any comfort from State because State goes off on other things. They're allowing little O-1 and O-2 officers to deal and that's no way to do it. I couldn't get any traction and then State wanted no to have any trouble with the high representative. Even though maybe I had a couple whisper to me, "You did a great job." They wouldn't stand up, you see? So, I was taken out and another fellow was put in, a friend of mine, a former friend of mine who went in and started to dismantle a number of things which you had to reestablish later because there's only one way to do it, but any way. I don't want to get into that.

Q: Okay, well, I think maybe this is a good place to stop. What do you think?

FARRAND: That's fine. If I could say one thing?

Q: Yes.

FARRAND: Beyond doubt it was the most, beyond doubt it was the most demanding and at the same time fulfilling job I ever had in thirty-five years, thirty-four years in the Foreign Service.

ROBERT L. BARRY
Administrator, OSCE Mission
Bosnia & Herzegovina (1998-2001)

Ambassador Robert L. Barry was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1934. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1956 with a degree in International Relations. He held fellowships at Oxford University, St. Anthony's College and Columbia University and also served for three years in the US Navy. Mr. Barry entered the Foreign Service in 1962. During his time with the Department of State he has served in Zagreb, Moscow, New York, Leningrad, Stockholm, Washington, and was Ambassador to Indonesia. He retired from the Foreign Service in 1995 but worked for the OSCE mission in Sarajevo after retirement. He was initially interviewed in 1996 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Well, then you left there in 1995?

BARRY: Yes, and by that time I had been career minister for something like 12 years so failing another appointment that I had to retire and so I did and got involved in some business operations with Ivan Selin.

Q: Who had been the former?

BARRY: Under Secretary for Management and head of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, but he wanted to do some power projects in Indonesia and so I got involved in that. I got involved in some consulting work and became a member of the board of directors of an oil company, Union, Texas Petroleum and was sort of going along happily involved in these things when I got a call in the end of '97 from Bob Gelbard who ended up being the ambassador to Indonesia saying, "How would you like to take over the OSCE Mission in Sarajevo?" Well, my initial reaction was, "Well, no I wouldn't thank you because I've got a lot of other things I have to do and I'd have to give them up if I went off and did this." But eventually they found a way where I could maintain my directorship and so forth and be on a personal services contract to go out and do the OSCE thing. I was reluctant to do it because I didn't anticipate that Peggy would want to come with me, but in the event she did. I was only asked to do it for six months until we had the 1998 elections. So, I said all right I'll do it and when I got out there I found it to be a fascinating job

and the final analysis stayed there for three and a half years. The OSCE of course, started out as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and produced the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. My friend and mentor George Vest told me the other day that Kissinger kept saying, "Well, what do you want to be involved in the CSCE thing for? It's just a nuisance." George always felt that it had a lot of potential for various things and felt certainly justified by the role that OSCE has taken and put into the field these very large field missions. My mission was the first large field mission and of course, its role was specified in the Dayton Peace Agreement. The UN had fallen into very bad odor at that time after the UNPROFOR mission in Bosnia which failed to protect any so-called safe areas including Srebrenica so they wanted to put another organization in there. So, a lot of the civilian implementation was assigned to OSCE including the administration of elections, the drafting of election regulations, the protection of human rights, military restructuring and military verification and the effort to try to democratize political parties. So, it was a mission when I arrived of about 1,000 people, 27 offices around the country, headquarters in Sarajevo, some 30 countries involved in the staff of the mission; my deputy was German and the political director was Russian. The heads of the regional offices were variously Italian, German and French and so forth, so it was a very multinational operation. Each country seconded its own personnel to this. The U.S. had the largest contingent. This had been a huge dispute at the Dayton Agreement period because the U.S. and France both wanted the job of head of mission this and finally it came to a discussion between Clinton and Chirac that decided that the issue in favor of the Americans, but then we did live with some resentment about that.

Q: Who would be the head of the?

BARRY: Well, it would be an American or a Frenchman.

Q: I would have thought the French as far as the Bosnians were concerned be rather bad odor because they hadn't performed very well when they were part of the UN- peacekeeping force.

BARRY: Well, they also were seen as being very pro-Serb. The French didn't see it that way.

Q: Well, I'm just thinking this might be a good place to stop Bob, because I'd like to spend a full time doing this. We'll pick this up the next time when you're off to Sarajevo in 199?

BARRY: January 1998.

Q: '98. We'll do that and cover that time then. We've just said you've been appointed, but we really haven't talked about how it worked or what you were doing or things like that.
Okay, today is the 8th of January, 2002. Bob could you tell me what your job was and how it was created?

BARRY: The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina was created by the Dayton Agreement and the Mission was launched in December of 1995. Bob Frowick was the first head of the Mission and this was the first large overseas field mission that OSCE ever put in place. You will recall that the UN was not in very good odor at that time particularly because of the problems with UNPROFOR and so these duties which had in other cases been assigned to the UN, were assigned to OSCE by the Dayton negotiators. It was quite a large mission. We had about 250

internationals and about 750 nationals; we had 27 offices around the country, headquarters in Sarajevo, regional centers in places like Banja Luka, Mostar, and Brcko.

Q: How about Pale?

BARRY: No, Pale was a stone's throw from Sarajevo, so you could easily go up and see Mr. Karadzic when you needed to, but Banja Luka was really what later became the center of Republic of Srpska, the capital of it. The task assigned to OSCE by the Dayton Agreement was first and foremost the conduct of elections and by conduct I mean everything connected with elections. The regulations, employing and training the people who ran the election, administering the election, counting the votes, implementing the election afterwards and so forth. We also had the responsibility of implementing human rights. We were responsible for human rights institutions like the Ombudsmen. We had a quite large field staff that dealt with getting people back their property, implementing property laws. We had a democratization department, which was training people how to operate in a democratic society, working with political parties. We had a section that dealt with military stabilization, that is inspecting to make sure that the requirements of the Dayton Agreement in terms of demilitarization were kept. Later on that turned into an effort to reduce the size of the armed forces and the expense of the armed forces. We had a department that dealt with implementing the elections after they were carried out, that is trying to enforce some power sharing. So, it was quite a large operation. The Swiss who were then the OSCE chairman in office in 1996 provided a Swiss military support unit that did logistics, provided an airplane and all in all it was a big operation. The deputy was traditionally German, the head of the political department was traditionally Russian, we had 30 nationalities represented on the staff and I'm pleased to say we had quite a large representation of women- about half of the senior staff were women and one thing that I put in place when I arrived there was the process of converting international positions, professional positions to national positions, that is to let Bosnians be in positions that previously had been filled by internationals thereby taking people like the drivers who also had law degrees and putting them in instead as national lawyers and so forth. So, that was the institutional arrangement.

Q: Well, just to get a clip, had the UN, did the UN have any more role there or not?

BARRY: The UN was assigned one role in Bosnia and that was international civilian policing. There is a UN mission there, but the role was limited to training and patrolling with the police. The police were a real problem institution, still are today I might add, but that was the role of the UN. The senior civilian representative was the high representative. This was a post created by the Dayton Agreement also. He was given coordinating responsibility. The first high representative was the ex-Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt and that turned into a large office with ever increasing powers as civil implementation lagged behind the military implementation. The military force was there by the time I got there had been reduced from 60,000 to some 30,000 and it was called SFOR, the stabilization force, traditionally headed by an American four star now a three star general and their task was to enforce the local military provisions of Dayton which was not very difficult to do because the military was exhausted.

Q: You're talking about the military in Bosnia?

BARRY: The Serb military and the Bosnian military. Under Dayton they were divided into two armed forces, two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina predominantly Muslim, but also the Croat minority and Republika Srpska (RS). Serb entity, which pretended to full sovereignty, although this was not provided for in Dayton. There was always a struggle between the central authority and the council of ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entities, particularly with the RS.

Q: By the way, could you comment a bit on the name which struck me right from the beginning which really shouldn't have happened. They called it something like the Republic of Serbska in the middle of something because it sounds like it gives it much more of an identity.

BARRY: Well, that was in fact a big problem of the original Dayton Agreement. This was however what emerged with the bargaining with Milosevic. Indeed the RS has a constitution, which provides for sovereignty of the country. It had what pretended to be a foreign minister. It tried to carry out its own relationships as an independent state with others and that was a constant struggle between the central authority, the international civilian administrators and the NATO military to try to keep that in place. In fact, when I arrived there, the day I arrived there, was a good example of that because we had been trying to implement election results in Srebrenica. You will recall this is the place where the great slaughter of Muslim men in particular took place, some 7,000 were killed. People were allowed to vote where they were before the war. Now Srebrenica had been a majority Muslim area, but of course after the war and after the ethnic cleansing, it was now almost entirely Serb. In the election of 1997 which was a municipal election, the Muslim refugees had come out in large numbers and had voted heavily for Muslim candidates so the election result dictated that the Srebrenica government would be 80% Muslim. Now there was a huge struggle in trying to implement this because the Serbs would not allow the Muslim councilors or anybody else back into the town so on the day before I had arrived my deputy was at that point the acting head of the OSCE Mission had tried to go to Srebrenica.

Q: Who was that?

BARRY: His name was Richard Ellerkman. He was a German and he had driven there in a convoy protected by the military and but then there had been a big demonstration to prevent them from entering the town. They had attempted to pull him out of his armored car. Who knows what would have happened afterwards? There was a helicopter that was accompanying the convoy that crashed because of the weather. Anyhow it was a very nasty incident. That was just on the day I had arrived there so from that point onward one of the key tasks was to try to push the government of the RS into line. There had been an extraordinary election for the RS parliament that had been held in November of 1997 and as a result of that and then as a result of a vote in the new RS parliament which the international community had certainly attempted to influence. Mrs. Plavsic, a Serb woman was elected president of RS and she opted for cooperation with the international community, leaving the SDS and forming her own political party.

Q: The SDS being what?

BARRY: This is the Serb Democratic Union, the party of Radovan Karadzic, the people who were the main aggressors of the war. Karadzic himself was in hiding at that point. He was and

still is sought by the international community because he was indicted by the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the UN organization set up to try people for war crimes. But he still had a heavy influence on the party exercised through the Serb members of the tripartite presidency, one Serb, one Croat, one Bosniac. The Serb was Krajisnik, now in the Hague, where he still awaits trial together with Plavsic who was indicted later. They were all in Pale at that time although when Plavsic took over as president she moved the capital of the RS from Pale on the outskirts of Sarajevo to Banja Luka which helped to civilize or urbanize the Serb politicians.

Q: Did you sort of get a feeling as I did from just reading accounts of the war that it was a little bit, the war with the Serbs a little bit like the hillbillies versus the flatlanders and Pale being sort of the hillbilly capital?

BARRY: Yes, that's certainly true. In addition the people who came and who were its worst participants in the war were not from Bosnia at all. These were gangs of paramilitaries from Serbia itself who were involved in ethnic cleansing and some of the worst atrocities of the war. These were people who had fought in the early stages of the war in places like Vukovar to drive the Croats out of Serb areas in Croatia. People like Arkan and that crowd, were the worst participants. Serbs had had a large population in Sarajevo in fact the leaders of the parties were not hillbillies at all. Karadzic was a professor of psychiatry from Sarajevo University, Plavsic was a professor of biology from Sarajevo University. Many of the leaders on all three sides were university professors. Being a professor or a doctor of something gets you further in politics in the former Yugoslavia than it does in most other countries in the world.

Q: When you arrived there, in the first place, what did the State Department or government or anybody tell you before you took over this job. I mean, here you're taking the president's shilling in a way, I mean at least to begin with. Somebody is saying, "Bob we want you to go out and make sure this happens" or do this or that or did you get much instruction? Were you sort of tossed into it?

BARRY: I spent some time in Washington before going out, not very long in fact, only about two or three weeks because I agreed to take the job on the 15th of December and I left on the 8th of January as it was necessary to get somebody out there right away. But I spent some of that time with Bob Gelbard who was then the sort of Balkan czar and his office of Balkan implementation. This was an organization set up in 1995 to be directly responsible to the secretary outside the bureau of European affairs. It was Gelbard who recruited me for this thing. The main task was to prepare for and hold the first set of countrywide elections which were set for November of 1998 and so I was sent there with the idea that I would conduct these elections and that would be it since I did not want to commit myself for a longer period. But of course, I knew something about the country to begin with. I read into the intelligence material and about what was going on. A central task that we saw for ourselves was taming the nationalists and this was an uphill struggle. We made a serious mistake in 1995 by thinking that early elections were going to solve the problem and be the exit strategy for the military. In fact, early elections of course simply confirmed the legitimacy of the nationalist parties who had led the country through the war. The three nationalist parties were the Croatian National Union, the HDZ which was made up largely of Croat nationalists under the protection of Tudjman in Croatia, the SDS

led by Krajisnik but under the sponsorship of Milosevic in Belgrade and the SDA led by Izetbegovic, arguably the victim during the war, but also, a strongly nationalist devout believer in Islam who really wanted to create a state under Bosniac that is Bosnian Muslim dominance. These three parties were the victors; all of the elections that we held except for the last election in 2000 where finally we did manage to break the monopoly of the nationalist parties. But all elections were marked by an effort to stir up racial ethnic distrust because that was the way of driving the people back to their political base. So, the election campaign periods were marked by the use of hate language and worse sometimes- assassinations of people campaigning for the wrong party and corruption and things like that and so that was part of our task to control that.

Q: One of the things that most of us in the Foreign Service or in government really never think about are elections. I mean elections are kind of held and yet there is a major infrastructure in any country that have had these things of people who know how to do it. I mean, when you arrived there, what sort of cadre did you have to put together elections?

BARRY: We had had two elections before I arrived, three actually, so it was under my predecessor Bob Frowick that we built this up. In the first place we created an election commission responsible for organizing all aspects of the election. It was made up of both nationals and internationals. As head of the OSCE Mission I was the chairman of that commission and the rules dictated that if the chairman decided differently than all the other members of the commission, the chairman's word carried. So, we had representatives of the three national groups represented on the commission. When I came I expanded the commission to bring in independent figures from the Bosnian community who were noted for being anti-nationalist. The best known of them probably was Zlatko Dizdarevics who wrote books about the war he was a correspondent for the newspaper, Oslobozhdenija. We altered the balance of that commission. But in on the field on election day it takes about 35,000 people to run an election. The people who sit in the polling places were organized by our various field offices. We tried to find people who had had previous experience in elections, but as you know Yugoslav elections were noted for 99% pro-Tito votes so we had to find people who were prepared to look at this as an exercise in building democracy. The incentive was that we paid them well.

Q: I was one of the 30,000 for the I guess the '97 vote.

BARRY: Well, these were the international supervisors. I'm talking about the 35,000 Bosnians who ran the polling stations. Whenever we had these elections in the early days we brought in international supervisors in every polling station and that amounted to about 2,500 people. In later days those numbers were reduced, but the international supervisors were theoretically in charge. They could overturn a decision by the local polling station committee if required and they were responsible for making sure that all the rules were observed, as they should have been.

Q: As you were going on this, did you, was there sort of a feeling on the American side was this different from other ones, that somehow if you get people to vote, you know, democracy, then all of a sudden good things would happen?

BARRY: Well, that was certainly the view in '95, but we learned that this wouldn't necessarily happen because the bad guys were voted into office and they remained bad guys. At the point

that I arrived we recognized that our task was to try to organize the nationalists out of office. That meant changing the rules under which the elections were held. We had to draft an election law. In fact the idea originally had been that that law would be drafted by the Bosnians themselves, but no progress was made on that. One of the things that we worked on was trying to put into the election law reform elements that would favor the parties that were democratic. Most parties believed in the principle of democratic centralism, as all of these parties were left over from the days of Tito.

Q: Accused Tito.

BARRY: So, as we were organizing the elections we were also trying to produce elements of reform. For example, we required by fiat that one-third of all candidates for political office had to be women. Not a natural tendency among Balkan political parties, but we insisted that any party that did not produce one third female its candidates would not be allowed to run in the election. We also had the power to dismiss candidates, forbid them from running for office, to remove people after they were elected for noncompliance with rules and regulations which we didn't use too often, but when it came to some of the worst nationalists who were using hate language and things like that we did not hesitate to remove them.

Q: Did you find as you were doing this, I mean somehow I think in this field the term often for Americans when we start getting involved in these things is well, "How naive you are" and Europeans tend to feel they are much more sophisticated. Sometimes I question this, but did you run across this sort of attitude among your international staff?

BARRY: I don't think so. I think the international staff was rather idealistic to start with or they wouldn't have been there. The people who came, initially were seconded to the OSCE by foreign ministries. But by the time I got there most of those people had gone and the people who were coming were people who'd been in non-governmental organizations before. Many of them had been election supervisors who liked what they were doing and wanted to stay. The Americans in the mission were obviously a minority. Of the senior staff of about 30, only about seven or eight were Americans. The Europeans were motivated by something very important. They wanted to do something for the Bosnians, but they wanted to do something for the Bosnians in Bosnia and not have them become refugees and come to Norway or Sweden or Germany or wherever. So, the idea that you could produce a real working political and economic body there that would create or allow economic development to take place, allow the 40% unemployment rate to be reduced to give people a sense that there was a future in this country was a motivating force for the people there. A lot of the people were young. We called them Danube groupies at first. But they were also highly motivated. They were not jaded, foreign office types.

Q: Yes. They'd seen it all and you know, which is I think one of the problems often we have come with a little fresher look. It may be naive, but it's fresher than, but you weren't suffering from that over sophistication?

BARRY: Oh, I don't think so. We believed it could be done or else people like myself wouldn't have spent three and a half years there. I'm not sure how much it was done, it certainly ended up better as I left as I left than it did when I arrived. There still remains a lot to be done. I think the

worst problem was the lack of any feeling about what a market economy was about. The initial breakup of Yugoslavia was not about nationalism, it was about the economy. Markovich was trying to reform the economy, trying to get rid of the idea of social ownership, trying to privatize and that was a challenge to all of the local satraps, resisted very strongly especially by Milosevic and Tudjman. They used the rallying cry of nationalism, but the purpose was to maintain control over the commanding heights of the economy, as the communists used to call it. That stayed in peoples' minds after the war no matter how much lip service was paid to the idea of private ownership and market economy and so forth. Political party leaders were mainly interested not in being elected to office, but being on the managing boards of the state owned companies. Unfortunately I think it is equally true of the opposition that later came into office, the social democrats. Those were the things that were fought about most strongly and the big cash cows, the state companies like the PTT or electric power generation were also sources of large amounts of money for political parties. Wse fought that throughout the period without a great deal of success. The World Bank and the IMF were interested in macro economic stabilization. In that sense they wanted to make sure that they set up a currency board, they tied the convertible mark to the German mark and they did a good job with dealing with inflation and making sure that the currency was sound, but they didn't succeed in breaking the barriers to foreign direct investment and that meant that the unemployment rate remained in the area of 40% throughout the whole time.

Q: Well, you look at Bosnia and you see a thin line to the coast, I guess they had it, did they make the coast, I can't remember now?

BARRY: Yes, they did as they did before the war as well. Bosnia had had a small strip of coast at Neum. Actually this goes back to the period of the Ottomans and the Venetians because that piece of coast was designed to be a buffer zone between Dubrovnik and the Ottoman Empire. But there was a rail line, which ended up in Ploce which, was in Croatia and the other exit was on the Danube at Brcko. But both the rail lines were cut off, first because the Croats were very reluctant to allow access to Ploce and because Brcko was a problem area and the Danube was all silted up.

Q: A number of questions here. One, there was this problem that I recall reading about where it was found that an awful lot of the money that went into enterprises there that was given by international funds or loans or whatever it is ended up being siphoned off for corruption and all that sort of thing. Was this a major problem?

BARRY: That was a news item, but it was not accurate. Yes, there was and is a great deal of corruption, but it was not money that had been channeled in by the international community. The real corruption was in the revenues that came to the government, whether through turnover tax or whether it was through state-owned companies. A lot of that money was diverted for illegal purposes. Of course there was a huge organized crime faction that operated there, smuggling was a huge business and the evasion of customs duties, the payment of bribes to people for favors done by the government was a real issue. The money that came in was largely reconstruction money and like most international aid money it didn't really flow to people in Bosnia at all, it flowed to companies in the countries that provided the aid who came in and built the new housing. We tried very hard to go after corruption. We in fact, the OSCE, developed a bill of

particulars against the Prime Minister of the federation, Mr. Bickacic who was guilty of all kinds of fraudulent activities as Prime Minister. We presented this in hopes that there would be a criminal prosecution. We finally had to dismiss him because he was carrying these things on, the attitude of Izetbogovic's political party was that this is a tradition that we have. He wasn't doing it for himself, he was doing it for the good of the party. The old story was that we in the Balkans never had our own state, so it was okay to steal from the government. Now the government is us, but we haven't really learned that so we're still stealing from the government, but we're stealing from ourselves.

Q: Did you find that, how did you deal with say the various sections, I mean with Izetbegovic or with Pompavich or others, is it Plavsic?

BARRY: Plavsic.

Q: And others. How did you deal with that?

BARRY: Well, they were always compliant. In other words, you'd go to see them and you'd say, "Look this is wrong, you've got to fix it" and they would always say, "Yes," but then they wouldn't do it. I remember my first interview with Krajisnik, the Serb member of the presidency. Of course he would always begin with this lecture about Serbian history. We got about ten minutes into this and I said, "Wait a minute. Now I know about this because I did my dissertation at the university on the empire of Stephan Dushan in the 14th century, so I might know more about this than you do." You would always go to see them and they would say, yes, yes, yes, and then they would go on and do the same old thing. Often the only way of affecting these things would be to punish them for their activities by removing some of their candidates, as eventually hauling
Krajisnik off to the Hague. In those cases the party affected always presented themselves as an injured party. Their constituents would generally support them. Some of the things we did were quite successful in public relations terms. For example, there's a huge problem of people living illegally in other peoples' houses they'd occupied after the war. Many of these people were politicians so we passed a rule saying if you're illegally in somebody else's house you can't hold office, you can't run for office. That was generally very well received by the public.

Q: Did you find Bob, that there was a new generation coming along, not necessarily in age, but people beginning to look at things a little differently?

BARRY: Oh there were, but they were leaving. UNDP took a poll and the poll discovered that 60% of the people below 25 planned to leave the country. We brought some people back, attracted them back for example to work for us because we paid them more than domestic employers, but the young people were turned off by politics and the job opportunities for graduates of Sarajevo University were very slim indeed. There are some promising people on the horizon, but Sarajevo itself is not the same kind of multicultural place that it once was. To get anyplace in politics you have to make peace with the nationalists. I remember a person I knew that had been in England during the war, had gotten a medical degree and gone to work in a teaching hospital in England and came back and went to the main hospital in Sarajevo to look for a job. The first question they asked was what political party do you belong to. His answer was,

"Well, I don't belong to any." They said, "Well, unless you want to join the SDA, Izetbegovic's party, there is no job for you in this hospital or anyplace else in the medical profession in Bosnia." That was kind of a carryover from Tito's days when you had to be a member of the communist party. Even then the medical profession and judiciary were not as politicized as they are today.

Q: I used to see this as seeing exchange students, this was back in the '60s who would come back on the academic or medical side and find it wasn't party as much as they hadn't, they didn't belong to the old boys' club, I mean they had gone to some place out there like Harvard or Yale and what the hell was this. They hadn't graduated from Belgrade U and so they weren't going to get anywhere.

BARRY: Yes, cronyism is part of the issue and was certainly part of the issue in the judiciary or police.

Q: Did foreign companies come in and start asking what are the opportunities for going here? I'm talking about companies that could come in and perhaps generate jobs and all that?

BARRY: Well, yes, and they did come and we encouraged them to come. I had an idea when I first arrived there that you could bring software companies in and of course there are a very large number of well-educated engineers in Bosnia. The information technology people that we had were very good. They could do software writing, but the whole atmosphere was anti-foreign investment. It took 16 separate authorizations for a foreigner to start a company and of course in each place you had to pay somebody a bribe. One of the things that you had to get was a certificate from the ministry of defense saying that the formation of this company be it a bakery or whatever would not undermine the national defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The attitude toward foreign investment was give us your money, do not participate in management and we will take care of it for you and provide you with some minimal return on that money. They would invite Japanese industrialists to come and talk about investing and of course, when they heard this sort of routine, they would laugh. Although Turkey of course was very eager to support a Muslim entity in Europe. The Turkish ambassador finally said, "I'm not inviting anymore people here to talk about investments because you people are simply unreal about what you expect." Of course, the old economy was already decaying or decayed in 1991. Under Tito's regime, the Yugoslav economy subsisted basically on the theory of nonalignment which meant let's say that Libya would get a Yugoslav construction company to come there and do something, but then they wouldn't pay them for it. Big industrial firms like Energoinvest had died already on the vine and there was no hope of restoring them although the government kept hoping they would. Peggy, my wife, was involved in small business because she was working with a group that had been started by the Norwegians called Bosnian Handicrafts which took refugee women and their knitting and marketed these things largely to foreigners. But the tax collectors came every week to make sure that all the taxes were paid. Nobody pays taxes except for small business who don't have any alternative and banking transactions were terrifically expensive. So, it was a real struggle.

Q: Let's talk about the economy. You're looking at this, I mean this sounds terribly discouraging I mean how did you and your staff get yourself up to continue because you know if the economy

doesn't work and if you can get the unemployment below 40%, I mean really start to make the economy work, if you can't get to that because of attitudes and other areas like resources and all that. How did you gear yourself up to you know, just getting on with the job?

BARRY: Well, the main responsibility for the economy was with the office of the high representative. They were not terribly effective with everything that was done. Clinton appointed a special ambassador initially to deal with trying to straighten out the economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, later he worked all around the Balkans. He was quite effective.

Q: Who was that?

BARRY: Oh, I've forgotten his name. We pressed hard on privatization trying to get the big cash cows privatized. The theory that had been developed was voucher privatization. Not a very effective way of doing it. Of course it was fought all the way along by political vested interests.

Q: What is voucher?

BARRY: Because it had been social ownership before, workers got vouchers which could be turned into stock. An individual private company could be sold on the open market, but this was fought by the vested interests because they wanted Russian style privatization whereby the assets of the company are stolen, the company is reduced to a shell and it is then sold to its current managers for a song and then the company is restored afterwards and the managers get rich. So, we tried to fight that. We removed some of the people who had been in charge of privatization. We passed a regulation saying that if you are on the managing board of the state company, you can't hold political office. That created great gnashing of teeth, but we got rid of several thousands of people who were both elected officials and on managing boards. We preached the idea of private enterprise to the opposition parties, the social democrats in particular. The idea was that when they came to power they would truly change the way they dealt with the economy. In the event they were pretty much like the rest of them, when they did finally come to power.

Q: What about, you had a Russian deputy. How did that work? Where was he coming from?

BARRY: Oh, I went through three of them I guess during my time there and they were all very different. None of them were particularly trying to push the Russian point of view. In fact the first one turned out to be a really excellent political officer who knew what was going on in the country, but the Russians wouldn't extend him I suppose because he wasn't giving them inside information. He stayed on in his private capacity. Actually I got along well with all of them. They were not very good managers. The sections that they presided over generally let everybody do what whatever they want to do.

Q: Speaking of managing and all this, I just finished an interview with Bill Farrand, who was in Brcko. I never quite understood. He explained it to me, but I never quite got the feeling. He seemed to be under almost separate orders of some sort of amorphous European entity.

BARRY: Well, he was under the Office of the High Representative (OHR). The job of the Brcko administrator was created at the Bonn summit of 1997, by the steering board of the peace

implementation council. The administrator of Brcko was under the office of the high representative, but with very wide latitude as to what he could do in Brcko. Bill and Gary Matthews who then followed him in that job and Henry Clark who's there now were subject to some degree of guidance from OHR, but basically this was an American enclave where the American military was stationed.

Q: I mean did you get involved with that or was that something sort of over the horizon?

BARRY: We got involved in it in terms of elections and in terms of knowing it was there, but it was not within the end of OSCE, the office of the high representative. The principals of the international community were the commander of SFOR, the American general, the high representative himself, who by the time I got there was a former Spanish foreign minister and later became Petritsch, the Austrian. The head of the UN mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina started out to be a Finn, Elizabeth Rhen, then it became Jacques Kline, and American and the head of OSCE. Plus, the representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. So that was the international steering board.

Q: Well, again I feel for this community working, the international community because as an observer I was on a main road, I can't think of the name of the town now, but it was between Sarajevo and Tuzla. It was a good size town and we kept getting visited by people wearing white suits and military, I mean I've never seen so many observers. It was going fine, there was no problem there, but my God we spent all of our time sort of entertaining these people who came through. But anyway I was just saying there were so many observers and this must have gotten in your way didn't it in things or not?

BARRY: At election time in particular, these people were out there to keep an eye on whether there was any sign of violence or effort to interfere with people. Yes, there were probably too many of practically everybody. When I first arrived there I called for a streamlining of the international community so there was a clear distinction of roles, an idea whose time was probably still not come although they're talking now about ways of reducing the number of people involved and making the responsibilities clearer.

Q: How did you feel about the elections? I mean the two places I did one in a Muslim area and another one in outside of Dervantar, which was essentially Serbian, and I was impressed. There was a certain variety of votes. I mean it wasn't all just for one person, obviously Serbs got the most in Serb areas and Muslims got it the most in others, but the election itself seem to go fairly well.

BARRY: Yes, I think they went well, the only trouble was the outcome. The idea that you'd get people to vote for parties that supported the concept of multiethnicity that is of sharing power with the other group in your town never got very far. It went progressively further each time to the point where in the last election in 2000 the parties were able to put together coalitions that excluded all the nationalists, but the tendency was at election time to remember all the bad things your Serb, Muslim or Croat neighbor had done wrong and try to elect a strong figure who would be able to protect your national interests.

Q: Speaking about the nationalists, you have Karadzic and a Mladec who was the general and both of these are indicted war criminals and all. Did you get involved in trying to get them?

BARRY: If the 30,000 or 60,000 strong military was not able to get them, I don't think the unarmed OSCE was in a position to get them. We certainly tried to urge the military to take a more active role in all of this. The trouble with the SFOR or IFOR military command structure was that the control of the forces on the ground still rested with the sending government, despite the fact that there was a four star general in charge of this thing. He could tell the French to do something and the French would turn back to Paris and the French would say, "Well, screw you, we're not going to do it." The areas where Mladic and Karadzic were reported to be were under French control. Now I think Karadzic and Mladic both went back and forth a lot. Mladic spent most of his time in Belgrade, Karadzic slipped back and forth across the border with Montenegro, but the military intelligence would deny that they knew where he was. That's because they didn't want to know where he was. The marching orders were, well, if you run into him somewhere all right, well, we'll take him, but he had a body guard, 150 people, heavily armed and SFOR was not particularly eager to do this. There were various attempts that were made including the insertion of some U.S. special forces with the task of doing this, but for one reason or another it never came to pass.

We insisted and finally it happened, but only recently, that the SDS the Serb nationalist party, had to expel indicted war criminals from the party. We threatened even to forbid the SDS from running unless they did this. Now finally it's been done, but I don't really expect Karadzic to end up in The Hague any time soon.

Q: Speaking of sort of the military side, I recall when I was in Derventa that we were briefed by a British army captain who was quite bitter about you Americans, talking to me about training the Bosnian army and we wanted, his idea was don't train anybody and keep it disarmed and we were. Could you explain about the issue of training?

BARRY: Well, this goes back to the idea of "lift and strike." If you remember in the early days of the Bosnian war the idea that came from the Democratic party in the campaign of 1992 was that we should lift the arms embargo against the Bosnians and use NATO air to strike the Serbs. After the war, the code word became train and equip. This was heavily sponsored in the U.S. Congress. Before the war, the Yugoslav army was essentially Serb, so the people who were officers, the people who had military training, were Serbs and the army of the Republika Srpska was closely tied to the JNA, the Yugoslav National Army. So, the idea was you had to deal with this problem by training and equipping the armed forces of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This all got started in 1994 and '95 when a private company made up of retired U.S. military called MPRI played a very heavy role in advising the Croatian military in their offensive against the Serbs which ended up driving the Serbs out.

Q: Was this a sort of CIA type sponsored private company?

BARRY: No, it was not CIA sponsored, but it was funded by the U.S. Congress. It was overt and not covert. But then after the war we continued that. I had my own misgivings about it because I felt that this was creating an imbalance and was also creating an armed force that was much too

large for any legitimate purpose other than going to war with each other again. But it still had a lot of support in the U.S. The Brits and the rest of NATO generally didn't like the program, but it was something that we stuck with and the Pentagon was keen on it and it was a big money maker for the people involved. The Brits were the most competent among the military there and they made a lot of fun of us about our force protection requirements. All of our people went along in armed convoys, on patrols and armored vehicles and so forth.

Q: Flak jackets, buttoned all the way up and all.

BARRY: Their people of course having spent all this time in Northern Ireland were pretty good of getting out among the people and talking to them. Ours have progressed over the years, but it was still a much too heavy, armored force for what was really required.

Q: Was there concern about Islamic fundamentalists? You know there were reports that a lot of these people were coming from Middle Eastern countries during the war and then they settled in and all?

BARRY: Yes, there was concern about it. It was not a very large-scale phenomenon. There were a number of mujahedeen who had come and formed a special unit in the Bosnian army and these carried out a lot of activities not approved under the laws of war. Some people have been indicted for it since. Some of these people stayed and they lived in a former Serb village in the federation where they really controlled the village. Some of these people were connected with al Qaeda; one of them was arrested in Turkey carrying a Bosnian passport where he was recruiting people to go fight in Chechnya. We insisted on several occasions that these people had to leave. It was part of the Dayton Agreement. In fact, Izetbegovic in particular was not at all eager to drive these people out. He felt he owed them a debt of gratitude for working with them during the war. They were finally moved out of the village that they were in last year and scattered around. We continue to find people who have Bosnian passports who have no real claim to Bosnian citizenship and in fact some of them were found in Afghanistan, the passports at least of people who had been involved in this. Of course, as you know this is not very firm ground for fundamentalism although there are some people in Bosnia who are Islamists in that sense. There was wing within Izetbegovic's party which always wanted and still wants an Islamic state under Sharia law which would involve the creation within the federation of a strictly Islamic state in the expulsion of Croats and Serbs and so forth. These people have become stronger within the SDA as time was going on, but as they have gotten stronger, the party has gotten weaker.

Q: Did Kosovo sort of hang over you like a cloud? Did you see any connection between what was happening in Bosnia, trying to put this thing together and the threat that has been there God knows how long of Kosovo all of a sudden the Serbs making a move on to Kosovo?

BARRY: No, it didn't loom very large unit of course the war came. At that point it certainly was overhead in the sense that we had continual noise of warplanes going overhead all the time. I think that the primary goal of everybody concerned including the Bosnian Serbs was not to get drawn in. We spent a lot of time talking to the Bosnian Serbs about distancing themselves from all this. There is among the Bosnian Serbs a group that would like to see the RS become part of Yugoslavia or Serbia. There are three separatists factions. There are the Croats who would like to

see Bosnian Croats become part of Croatia, there are the Serbs who would like to see it become part of Serbia and then there are the Islamists in Bosnia who would like to see an Islamic state created there. This is what people were fighting about during the war, but we had taken a very hard line saying that you all signed up for this deal, you can't get out of it by holding a referendum or something like that, so live with it.

Q: Did you find that the bombing really not so much of Kosovo, but of Belgrade and the area around it, did that have any effect on weakening the hold of the attraction of a greater Serbia do you think?

BARRY: Yes, I think it did, not as much as the final departure of Milosevic and the departure of Tudjman from the scene. When they both left and new governments came in which at least paid lip service to the idea of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as an independent state, that decreased the attractive power of separatism. But every time the Kosovo Albanians say we've got to have an independent Kosovo, this causes people in both Belgrade and Banja Luka to say well if that's the case then we need compensation in the form of joining the RS to Serbia.

Q: How about during the Kosovo war Montenegro was making noises about both distancing himself from greater Serbia and maybe even becoming independent. Did this have any effect on what you all were doing?

BARRY: The international community's position is that redrawing the map of the Balkans would have serious consequences in terms of independence for those entities within Bosnia which feel that they should be independent. So, our advice to Montenegro was autonomy, not independence and of course now that Milosevic is gone, pressure on Montenegro to stick with the federation has increased I think.

Q: You haven't mentioned dealing with the Croatians. How did that play out while you were there?

BARRY: Well, I suppose that was in some ways the most difficult problem that we had. The Croatians felt themselves a threatened minority. The HDZ was a highly centralized, highly paramilitary party especially after a coup within the party in 1999 in which a military wing of the party took over with the sponsorship of Tudjman. They felt cheated by the Dayton Agreement. They felt they needed to have their own entity and many of them felt that they ought to secede and join Croatia, which Tudjman welcomed, but of course, the post-Tudjman government just hated the idea.

Q: Why did they hate the idea?

BARRY: The Croats and Bosnia are known as sort of hillbillies of Croatia, hardheaded, stubborn, involved in all kinds of criminal activities and it would be sort of like inviting the Mafia to dinner. The Social Democrats in particular in Croatia can't stand the sight of them. It would also shift the balance in favor of the old HDZ in Croatia which was a party on the way out. There were very many people in political life down there who deserved to be indicted and some of them probably still will be. The Croatian generals, Tudjman's generals were heavily

involved in Croat politics there in Bosnia. The foreign minister, for example, was widely suspected to be among the list of people about to be indicted for war crimes. We tried hard to root out some of these people and some of the rules for elections were designed to undermine the monopoly rule of the HDZ in Croatian politics. In fact, in the 2000 election we did something that I at the time had reservations about, but the high representative was in favor of it and the steering board was in favor of it. We changed one rule that the Croats were very fond of which gave essentially the HDZ a monopoly in the upper house of the federation parliament and the ability to block everything that went through. They then called for a referendum on election day, which would, be a referendum sponsoring the idea of independence for Bosnian Croats. We said they couldn't do it on election day and they went ahead and did it anyhow. We then removed a number of people from office and removed some mandates from the HDZ, which caused a big dustup with the international community. We tried hard to work with moderates and of course, you could divide Croats by where they lived. If they lived in exclusively Croat areas which were largely in what used to be called Herzegovina, a coast area, they were pretty much all hardliners even the Franciscan priests down there had been hardliners and were from the day of Ante Pavelic.

Q: Oh God yes, I mean you know the burning the church at Gleena and all that. The little brown brothers were not nice people.

BARRY: Now they're all through that area, there are monuments to the freedom fighters of Ante Pavelic. But the people who lived in mixed areas were much more moderate including the Cardinal and the priests that lived there and so forth. So the moderates created a new political party, the NHI, but it never has gotten any traction in the majority Croat areas which are still heavily hardline.

Q: What about the situation on Mostar? I mean it's sort of a nasty thing with a cross on one side and the Bosniacs on the other?

BARRY: We spent a lot of time on that. We had Americans running the OSCE in Mostar like Gary Matthews. It's gotten better over time, but of course, you go to Mostar, this is like Gallipoli. They fought each other from across the street for two and a half years and the destruction was huge. So, for a very long time it was considered worth your life if you were a Bosniac across the river to come onto the Croat side. We did sponsor and support a moderate Croat Neven Tomich who worked with a moderate Bosnian who tried to unify the administration in the city and so forth. But Tomich was eventually expelled from the HDZ because he was too moderate and the Bosniac was at odds with the rest of the SDA, so in a way keeping that division going was in the interest of both nationalist parties.

Q: What about the big problem of resettlement?

BARRY: It's going faster now in the last two years than ever. I think there were 70,000 minority returnees last year and this year it is projected to be 100,000. You often wonder why these people want to go back. If you are a Muslim refugee from Srebrenica do you really want to go back and live among these people again? But they do and they are, roots run very deep in this part of the world. So, we concentrated on trying to get people's property back for them. We

intervened. We'd go and fire the municipal authorities who were not promoting this. We would write legal briefs for them. We would help them file the applications and over time we've had some considerable success in getting people back their homes, but of course, you can imagine, the local politicians had moved into the houses that were vacated by the minorities, so we fired the politicians. I think that the return process is coming to an end. People who have stayed out, are going to stay out.

Q: You know you look at, when I was in Dervantar which is close to the Croatian border, there are houses that have just been blown up all along the way.

BARRY: Oh, well that's what they did including after the war so the people wouldn't return.

Q: Well, of course, they blow up the mosques there.

BARRY: Now these places are being rebuilt. In the Serb majority areas in the RS, Muslims are returning. There are Croats returning to the RS from Croatia. There are communities being restarted, but this is coming at a time when there is not nearly as much money as there used to be for reconstruction and housing. The demand now for minority return exceeds the supply of houses for them to come back into. Then you have to fight all these trivial things like how do you get an i.d. card, how do you get your electricity reconnected, and how do you get water because the local authorities don't want to provide these things for these people in these areas.

Q: You left there in 2001?

BARRY: Yes.

Q: When?

BARRY: Well, finally in July of 2001. I had planned to leave in the fall of 2000, but at that point the U.S. didn't have a candidate to succeed me and I was asked to stay on, so I stayed on for the implementation of the 2000 elections. I left in July. Well, I left initially in May because that was the time I had planned to, but I was asked to formally maintain the job as head of the mission and until an appointment of a successor was arranged.

Q: Who was that?

BARRY: Bob Beecroft. There was a fight between the British and the Americans about who would get the thing. The British finally withdrew the name of the ex-general who was a candidate. So, Beecroft came in July. I went back in June to turn the thing over and left then.

Q: What was your feeling about whither Bosnia when you left in '01?

BARRY: It depends on what happens at the next election because the next election is going to be in the hands of the Bosnians. The OSCE is not going to fund it; it is not going to supervise it. They finally did pass an election law. The nationalists badly want to get back in power. The SDA and HDZ are conspiring with one another to return to the status quo ante, which was that we will

support you in anything you, the Bosnian nationalists want to do as long as you let us the Croatian nationalists do whatever we want to do. If that happens, if the nationalists win again and if the effort to contain the SDS and the RS fails, then I think the international community is going to give up on Bosnia. If on the other hand the so-called alliance parties, the alliance for progress, the social democrats, the non-nationalist Croats, the current prime minister of the Republic of Serbska, Mladen Ivanic, who was a moderate economist. If they succeed in holding onto power, then I think the country has a future. The future would be determined by what the citizens of the place are going to want to do. Most of my friends, and I have a lot of friends there that say, well if this thing goes back to the nationalists we want out of it. Most of the people who worked for us are saving up their money so that if the time came when they wanted to get out they had enough money to be an immigrant and a candidate and all that.

Q: I just wanted to ask, how did your wife find living in Sarajevo?

BARRY: She loved it. She has founded a U.S. NGO to support this Bosnia handicrafts outfit. She is deeply involved in that still and she got very much involved with women's groups there. I think it was as fascinating an experience for her, of course, it had been our first post in the Foreign Service. She spoke the language and enjoyed it immensely.

Q: Okay, well, we'll stop at this point.

MARSHALL P. ADAIR
Political Advisor to the U.S. Forces
Tuzla (2002-2003)

Mr. Adair, son of a United States Foreign Service Officer, was born in Maryland and raised at Foreign Service posts in the United States and abroad. He was educated at Middlebury College and joined the Foreign Service in 1972. During his career Mr. Adair held a number of senior positions at the State Department in Washington, DC, dealing with a variety of areas, including relations with the US military Commands, Economic and political issues in Europe and Department personnel matters. A Chinese language specialist, his foreign posts include Paris, Lubumbashi, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Beijing, Rangoon, Chengdu (China), and Tuzla (Bosnia). Mr. Adair was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2011.

Q: Well could you explain why we had a military post in Tuzla, Bosnia?

ADAIR: Okay. When the Dayton Accords were negotiated, a key factor was that NATO would provide a sufficient military force to guarantee the peace within Bosnia. NATO sent 20,000 soldiers into Bosnia, fully armed with tanks and the whole show. Most of the force was American. The force itself was strong enough to withstand any local challenge, and it was fully backed by NATO and the United States. All of the parties to Dayton were willing to agree to a peace settlement, because the NATO force ensured that none of the factions would be in a position to take military advantage of a peace. The headquarters of the NATO force were in

Sarajevo, and elements of it were scattered throughout Bosnia. Initially there were lots of little bases all around the country. They were gradually reduced, and when I arrived there were three main bases. One was in Banja Luka, which was up in the northwest of the country. It was primarily British and Scandinavian. Another was in Mostar, in the southeastern part of the country. That was French, Spanish and German. The third was in Tuzla, which was the northernmost major Bosnian city. It was also right near the largest part of the Republika Srpska, which was the Serb part of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Americans were put into Tuzla because that was considered to be the most dangerous. They were stationed on a base that was called "Eagle Base". I can't remember its Serbo-Croatian name. It had been a Yugoslav air force base and had all the infrastructure that was needed. Initially, the NATO force was led by a three-star general, an American general stationed in Sarajevo, and two-star generals headed the other three.

Just before I arrived, they downgraded all those generals by one star. When I flew down by helicopter from Zagreb, Tuzla's last two-star was still in place. When I moved to Tuzla the first one-star was just arriving. We had an American political advisor to the three-star in Sarajevo, who then became a two-star, and we had an American political advisor to the American sectoral commander, in Tuzla. We also had an American representative up in Brčko, a special district formed between Serb and Bosniac areas of northern Bosnia that had been one of the most seriously affected areas. Bill Farrand just wrote a book about his experience there as Brčko Supervisor.

So I went out to be the political advisor to the American force in Tuzla. When I arrived, it was the 28th Division from Pennsylvania, which was a National Guard force. They were there for six months, and were then replaced by another National Guard unit, the 35th Division from Kansas. I had never been a political advisor before. I really wasn't sure what I was going to do. I had some knowledge of the Dayton negotiations and the whole process of putting that peace accord together, but I was not an expert in the region. I did not know Serbo-Croatian, and I really wish that I had because it would have made a huge difference.

I first met the 28th Division when I went out to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas to observe them for the end of one of their exercises. I was very impressed by their dedication and the seriousness with which they took the exercise, but the exercise itself seemed very shallow to me. Perhaps training exercises almost by definition are sort of shallow. And I watched this process it intensified my question about how I was going to help these guys. I had my first interview with the general with whom I was going to work. That was interesting. He was a smart guy but he was a unique personality, and he was not particularly popular with his soldiers.

I went back to Washington, cleaned up my stuff and then flew out to Germany to meet them at the American training base near Hohenfels. Our military had set up a whole training region with a village and roads similar to Bosnia. They put them through all their peacekeeping - or their peace maintaining - exercises and this whole group spent I think two weeks out there basically practicing their daily routines. They started in the morning with intelligence briefings, handed out assignments, and then went out in their vehicles, drove around, met Bosnians in the village and stuff like that. They were given a variety of problems and tests. I spent about a week with them, attending their meetings, going through the exercises and making comments where I could. Then we went on to Tuzla.

They were wonderful people, and really excited about doing this job. They were National Guards people so it was all temporary work for them. But they loved the military and the time that they spent doing their military work. Many of them were really smart and very good at what they did. I hated going through all the organizational, bureaucratic nonsense that they go through; but it seemed to be necessary given the size of the group of people that they had to manage. Every evening there was a large command meeting where every unit had to make a report. They had built a large auditorium with bleachers, but each level of the bleachers had desks, and every desk had a computer. The general and the heads of all of the sections - and I - would sit down on the stage looking up at all these people. The general would listen to the reports and give his instructions - and this would go on and on and on and on. I didn't have much to do in those meetings – except to keep awake. I was able to help a little more in the early morning meetings when we were getting the intelligence briefings and trying to assess what was coming in.

I tried to get out as much as I could. The military would go out on their patrols but they were still required to go with a minimum of two vehicles, usually more, in full battle dress with all their weapons. Of course, when they did that it was a little hard to talk to people. Nevertheless, the people in the Bosnian countryside were happy to have them there, given what they gone through just a few years earlier. They also seemed to like the Americans, and they wanted to have a lot more contact. However, the Americans were not permitted to leave the base except on official duty.

Q: There were a lot of complaints. I was there earlier as an election observer. The Brits went in, you might say, with soft clothing - without the helmets and the armor - and sort of drifted around. But when the Americans came, they were fully buttoned up and rather formidable. We were not going to take any casualties.

ADAIR: Yes. It was a little bizarre, particularly when I was there, which was five or six years after the Dayton Accords. There must still have been some threat, however, because every once in a while the helicopters would detect radar locking on to them and have to take defensive measures. By the time I arrived there was also a growing concern about terrorism. The stabilization force was not only concerned with preventing war between the factions. They were also after terrorists.

Q: If there had been this perspective, you might point out why they would worry about terrorists in that area.

ADAIR: During the war there had been a fairly significant influx of people coming from Muslim countries in the Middle East, Jihadists, who came to help defend the Muslims against the Serbs - and there was truly a need for it. Some of the people who came in to help were political extremists themselves. Quite a few of the fighters chose to stay in Bosnia. It was a beautiful place, and some of them married people there. Many of them settled in and made Bosnia their home. After 9/11 we began looking more closely at many Diaspora Muslim communities; and some of the Jihadists that went to Bosnia were from more extremist sects, like Wahhabis. The American military in Bosnia had to consider the possibility of threats to its soldiers and facilities from all quarters – and this was one that was particularly sensitive after the 9/11 attacks. Some

people believed that Bosnia was an area where international terrorists could hide and likely were hiding. It was a place from which they might move into Europe or go elsewhere to attack the United States or others. Therefore, looking for these kinds of people was one of the missions of this group. After 9/11, when so many people in the United States wanted to see some kind of action taken to punish those who had attacked the United States and to thwart any future attacks, targeting potential terrorists in Bosnia was something to which the military could respond enthusiastically. I believed that it was given too high a priority. Specifically, it detracted from the ongoing task of looking for war criminals like Karadzic and Mladic. When I was there, particularly with the first group, there was no effort to go after war criminals. Several of the people told me that they'd been told before coming that wasn't their job. Even the embassy did not seem to be particularly engaged.

Q: You know, I heard that the French were making great efforts to avoid confrontation, because they had to deal with the Serbian republic.

ADAIR: Well everybody was making efforts to avoid confrontation. The Serb areas were mostly in the British and American sectors. I didn't get over to either Banja Luka or to Mostar for any length of time. There was more of the Croatian influence down in that area around Mostar than Serb. It had been a terrible battleground between Serb and Croatian forces. The historic bridge in Mostar – the Stari Most - which was a beautiful thing, was destroyed by the shelling, and has only recently been rebuilt.

Q: It had a "T" on top of the thing way back, way back. This is back in the '60s.

ADAIR: Really? Did you ever see any of the kids diving off of that bridge?

Q: No, I never did.

ADAIR: Well I saw a couple of them doing it when the bridge was being rebuilt. It was very high and looked like a pretty scary dive.

Q: How did you find your relations with the political side? First, with the American embassy there.

ADAIR: Well, I tried. I was fairly far away. It was a long drive from Tuzla to Sarajevo. Occasionally we could go down by helicopters but most of the time I would drive. I would call on the ambassador and others in the embassy. I knew the DCM who had been in the European Bureau when I was there before. I spent some time with the defense attaché as well. But I never felt like I had a lot to offer them, and they of course were very busy. Some of them had no reservations about sharing information with me if I had specific questions. If I had been in the embassy - particularly if I'd been the ambassador - I would have wanted to have the political advisors in all of those places talking to me or my staff on a regular basis. I would have been giving them assignments. But it seemed they were primarily focused on their own little world.

We also had an American Ambassador who was head of the OSCE office in Sarajevo, and another who was the deputy high representative to Paddy Ashdown. I knew both of them from

before. We had an American who was the UN representative, Jacques Klein. All of these guys got together and talked, of course, but it didn't seem like there was a great deal of synergy. Synergy was something that seemed to have been elusive right from the outset. Perhaps in the Balkans it is difficult to get people to work together even if they don't come from the Balkans. There were plenty of stories not just about policy and strategic differences among the international players in post-Dayton Bosnia, but also petty personal differences.

Q: Well that's Europe.

ADAIR: Perhaps, but in Bosnia it was silly and could be tragic.

Q: Well yes.

How'd you find the elements of the Bosnian government that you dealt with?

ADAIR: I didn't deal with the central Bosnian government in Sarajevo that much. We dealt with the city administration of Tuzla. I met with the mayor fairly often. The commanding general and I called on the local governor, who was a very impressive guy, and had played an important part in holding the community together during the war. I met with mayors in the smaller towns as well. I had dealings with some of the Serb officials in the Republic of Srpska. That's where some of the problem areas were. We had to go talk to them about issues such as reintegrating the people that had fled the ethnic cleansing, and protecting the rights of minorities. We had to keep tabs on them, and ensure they were complying with the terms of the Dayton Accords. We sometimes had to pressure them, or even recommend their removal by the high representative. There was an office of the high representative in Tuzla and the head of that office was an American Foreign Service officer at the time. I would see him quite a bit. He held a monthly meeting of all of the international organization representatives in Tuzla and the surrounding region. Some of them would come in from outlying areas like the Republika Srpska. We would talk about the issues, and about how we could bring our different resources to bear on various problems. We had some synergy there.

The Tuzla government and the Tuzla environment were really interesting. Tuzla during the war had been an enclave. I don't think it was completely surrounded, but it had been besieged by the Serb Army. It had been shelled. The local government had been pretty enlightened. They had resisted the pressures to engage in ethnic cleansing. When the Serb army began shelling the city, there had been some pressure to take retribution on the Serb population of Tuzla. However, the leadership of the city, which was Bosnian, had said, "No; they're our neighbors and fellow citizens, and we're not going down that road. Anybody that wants to leave is free to leave, but we are one community, and we're going to protect our own." Almost everyone chose to stay. They protected each other, and it was really pretty amazing.

Q: Yes, I was impressed. I went there when I was an election observer. It was pointed out to me that there were orthodox and catholic churches as well as mosques, and they were not destroyed.

ADAIR: Right.

Q: The Serbs went around blowing up all the mosques and all that.

ADAIR: In other places.

Q: In other places but not in Tuzla.

ADAIR: Right, it was very impressive. They talked a line and they lived it.

Q: I realize you were in one part and all but did you get any feel that Bosnia was beginning to coalesce?

ADAIR: They were trying to, or at least some people were trying to. However, one of the problems was that much of the political and economic power was still in the same hands as before the war or during the war. I don't know exactly how to say this, but in times of trouble - certainly in times of chaos - economic power tends to fall into the hands of people who are clever and strong, don't necessarily play by the rules and have relatively little civic commitment. When Dayton was negotiated, the parties basically agreed to keep the status quo. Therefore, many of the people who had benefited from the nastiness of the war kept their gains. Some of the people in prominent political positions were vulnerable, because the high representative had the power to remove them from their positions if he concluded that they were obstructing the process of the accords. That didn't necessarily apply to people in the business community, and they of course continued to exert substantial influence. That made it more difficult to really change things, and perhaps also more difficult to help all those who had just barely survived the war. Those people looked around and saw that the real power was still in the hands of the people who had been doing the damage. I think it was very hard for many of those people to accept that the future was going to change. They still had to play the same game.

There was an organization in Tuzla that had been put together by a few women who were refugees from Srebrenica. Many of the women of Srebrenica had fled to Tuzla with their female children, but without their husbands and older male children who had been killed. Many of them didn't have any way of supporting themselves. Several of these women created an organization in Tuzla that employed the refugees making wool carpets and clothes. We used to go down there to talk with them and get sweaters and things like that. And I remember once talking with one of the women who was running it. I asked her what she had planned for the weekend, and she said she was going back to Srebrenica with her daughter. I said, "You're going back to Srebrenica?" She replied that she had a house in Srebrenica and she was still working on trying to get it back. Remember, this was eight years after the peace agreement! When I asked how that was going, she sort of looked at the floor and shrugged. Clearly it was difficult for her. I don't know if you've seen that when people really don't have a whole lot of hope they sort of shrug as if they are trying to push off something that is imprisoning their spirit. Then she explained that the person that she had to work with in the government that was managing the return of all the houses was the same man who had separated her from her husband. It was a Serb soldier that separated her from her husband when the city of Srebrenica fell. That individual, the man who she had to see as responsible for the death of her husband, was the one that she had to sit across the table from and negotiate the return of her property in Srebrenica. How do you deal with something like that?

If that kind of thing is repeated over and over again, how can the population have any confidence in the process of reform and democratization? It was really hard to say honestly that it was going to get better. In fact, I tried to argue - and I had no standing or voice to really do so - that the withdrawal of the NATO forces, which was being planned then, was premature. The reason that it was premature was that the civilian side of the equation was still incomplete. The office of the high representative had been extremely ineffectual, most of the time. Sometimes hadn't done anything at all. When I was there Paddy Ashdown was really trying. He was trying harder than any of the others, and he was being more successful than his predecessors, but it was too late. And in addition, he was faced with the prospect of all those forces going.

I tried to make my argument in Naples at the regular meetings of political advisors there. I also went back to Brussels and talked with Nick Burns who was the U.S. ambassador to NATO at the time, and I laid it out for him. He told me it was just the military making plans, and that there was no political approval. Of course, the problem was that the only ones making plans were the military, and things went exactly according to their plans. I argued in the book that I wrote recently that this was potentially dangerous for Europe in the long term. We'll see. I don't know a lot about what's happened in Bosnia recently but it's certainly not been a whole lot better for the people. Jobs are scarce, and I think that organized crime and that kind of stuff is still pretty serious.

Q: When did you write the book?

ADAIR: I just finished it and it will be published this summer.

Q: What's it going to be called?

ADAIR: Watching Flowers from Horseback.

Q: Okay.

Well, how long were you working in Tuzla?

ADAIR: I was there for a year. That would be more like 10 months.

Q: From when to when about?

ADAIR: I think I actually got there in September. I left probably in the middle of June.

Q: Of what year?

ADAIR: I got there in the fall of 2002 and I left in the early summer of 2003.

Senior Advisor for Bosnian Affairs
Washington, DC (2000-2001)

Ambassador, OSCE Mission
Bosnia & Herzegovina (2001-2004)

While Mr. Beecroft served as Political Officer at a number of posts in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, his primary focus was on Political/Military Affairs, both in Washington and abroad. Later in his career he served as Special Envoy to the Bosnia Federation and subsequently as Ambassador to the Office of Security & Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) operating in Bosnia & Herzegovina. A native of New Jersey, Mr. Beecroft served in the US Army and studied at the University of Pennsylvania and the Sorbonne in Paris before joining the Foreign Service in 1967. Mr. Beecroft was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

BEECROFT: The summer of 2000. Frankly, I had not lost my fascination with Balkan affairs, and at this point EUR asked me if I wanted to become the Senior Advisor for Bosnian Affairs. There were still about a lot of people doing Balkans issues, in an office called EUR/SCE, South Central Europe. I said yes. I couldn't resist. Frankly I had a bee in my bonnet about getting back to the Balkans. This was four and a half years after Dayton had come into force, and it was still very much a central issue. There was no certainty about whether Bosnia was going to succeed. No one knew what was going to happen, whether there'd be another Balkan war. You'll recall that NATO had conducted a bombing campaign against Serbia in '99, after Milošević attempted to "cleanse" Kosovo of its overwhelmingly Albanian population.

Q: This was Kosovo?

BEECROFT: Yes. We had a UN-led force in Kosovo by 2000.

Q: I've interviewed Bill Walker.

BEECROFT: Okay, so you've got it from the inside then. In the summer of 2000 I left PM and went back to EUR and picked up the Bosnia account. This was not a classic Bosnia desk. It was bigger than that. There were still probably 50 or 60 people in this office dealing with all aspects of the Balkans.

Q: You say the Balkans, you're talking about Bosnia, does that include Kosovo, too or not?

BEECROFT: Different people had different accounts. You may know some of the names -- Jim Pardew, who is now ambassador in Sofia, for one. Jim came over from DoD as a colonel, worked on Bosnia in the early days, successfully drove the Train and Equip program, and eventually became Ambassador to Bulgaria. A no-nonsense, cut-to-the-chase straight shooter. Jim worked very closely with the Secretary. There was Jim O'Brien, a State Department lawyer who actually helped write the Dayton Accords. He wrote the Bosnian constitution, which is still in force. He's now with Albright Associates. One of smartest, calmest, kindest people around – unlike many people at State, he knew how to listen. Who else? Jim Dobbins. Jim was Special

Adviser to the President and Secretary of State for the Balkans in the late '90's, then became Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. Very experienced, analytical, a cool customer. Dobbins is now at RAND, and he has published some brilliant articles on lessons learned in the Balkans. He was here at the National War College as a speaker just 10 days ago and wowed everybody.

Q: I've interviewed Jim.

BEECROFT: Yes. So I spent the next year traveling back and forth to Sarajevo elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina, participated in some conferences in Croatia and Serbia, and tried to keep the momentum going. I mean we still had lots of problems with the relationship between the two entities. The economy was a disaster, basically no outside investment -- who is going to invest in a country that could fall apart again? There were still three separate armed forces, a recipe for instability, and that was one of the things I worked very hard on, trying to find ways to begin to bridge the gap among the various militaries. We didn't get very far. Tom Miller was our Ambassador, very much a Holbrooke man. He's now our ambassador in Athens. Aggressive, take-no-prisoners style, actually fit the situation quite well. Tom worked with his British counterpart to put together a coalition, for the 2000 elections, a so-called moderate coalition. I say so-called because frankly they weren't all that moderate.

Q: Nothing's moderate.

BEECROFT: No. But at least you didn't have the hardliners pulling the strings. So, all of these things were on the agenda throughout that year, 2000-'01. There was still no end in sight. In the summer of '01, Jim Pardew asked me whether I'd like to go back to Bosnia as a confirmed ambassador and head the OSCE mission. It would be an unaccompanied tour, so my wife Mette and I talked and agreed I should do it. I went out to Sarajevo in the summer of 2001, then came back to Washington in November for my confirmation hearings.

Q: Let's still while you were on the, had the Balkan watch.

BEECROFT: Yes.

Q: You were there when the Bush II administration came in?

BEECROFT: That's right. '00 to '01.

Q: Did you feel any change because of, after all the Bush administration wasn't going to do nation building. That seemed to be one of the mantras and its sort of ironic, but staying away from a lot of foreign affairs and that sort of thing. Did you pick up that attitude? Was that there or you were sort of left on your own?

BEECROFT: It may seem strange, but that didn't really hit us. I think the new administration's attitude was "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." We were seen as keeping things quiet in a place that still needed work, and where they didn't want things to get any worse. We weren't in the spotlight, and that was fine. Bush wasn't inaugurated until January, and I stayed on into the summer of 2001 --six or seven months. After 9/11, the focus wasn't on us at all. There was an

assumption, which was later borne out, that eventually this rather large establishment, the South Central Europe office and the Bosnia Working Group, would be closed down, but frankly that would have happened whether it was a Gore or a Bush administration. Things were going in that direction, but the SCE staff was still in the double-digit numbers when I left.

Q: Was the experience still pretty positive of the people there, particularly the military and the Foreign Service?

BEECROFT: You mean in Bosnia?

Q: Yes.

BEECROFT: I think it was. One of the things that happened that turned out to very positive, I alluded to it before, was the substitution of Reservists and National Guardsmen and women for the active military. Of course, after 9/11 that really picked up. It turned out that Reservists and National Guardsmen because they are a bit older and have day jobs in the civilian world, bring a lot more practical expertise to situations that have a civilian aspect to it than the standing military, the active military can do. To give you one example, the U.S. had a major presence at a former Yugoslav air force base outside of Tuzla. The first National Guard unit that went in, sometime in the fall of '01, was from the Texas National Guard. It turned out that the deputy commander was a full colonel from Dallas, who was in his day job the director of the Dallas public works system. He took it on himself to fix the city of Tuzla sewer system in his spare time. Now, if you've ever been in Tuzla, you know there's a problem. The city sits on top of a warren of abandoned coal mines. The city is sinking, and as it does, the rising water table is messing up the sewers. This colonel went to work on this, probably for the first time ever because Tito didn't do public works very well either. When he was done, new pumps had been installed, all the drainage pipes cleaned out, and the Tuzla sewage system and the pumping system were working. It was a tremendously successful public relations effort, not just for SFOR, but for the United States in particular. It also was a message that the military can do for you besides killing people and breaking things. This is the really good side of state-building. No one should step in and say, this isn't your mission. The mission is defined by the needs.

Q: Well, then you, when did, you were still waiting for confirmation when 9/11 happened.

BEECROFT: I was already in Sarajevo, heading the OSCE Mission, but not yet with the formal title.

Q: How did that hit your bureau? Did everybody see this, what did this mean?

BEECROFT: Much less than I would have thought. I was in an airplane from Vienna when 9/11 happened, circling over Brussels airport. The practice had been for the PIC Steering Board -- the Peace Implementation Council at the political director level -- to meet in Brussels every few months. When we landed and entered the terminal, it was obvious something serious had happened, because the place was very heavily patrolled and everyone was glued to the TV screens. That was where I first saw the towers burning. By the time we got to the hotel in central Brussels, the question was whether the meeting would even go ahead. It did, the next day, but the

participants were in a state of semi-shock. I then flew back to Sarajevo. I have to say that in the post-9/11 period, U.S. policy on the Balkans has remained, I think, quite well managed. Obviously its place on the list of priorities and concerns went way down, but fortunately it was a time when the beginnings of a viable state structure were beginning to be seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The question Washington asked was, How can we maintain and if possible accelerate the transition? I have to give Washington credit for not abandoning the Balkans -- just saying, okay, we've got other fish to fry, have a nice day. We didn't do that. The U.S. military stayed there, as COMSFOR went from three stars to two stars to one star, and now we're going to be leaving. The NGOs had already left -- NGOs are like goldfish, they go where the food is, and Bosnia had stopped being interesting. More and more, our mantra has been that Bosnia and Herzegovina is part of Europe. It is eventually something that the Europeans will have to resolve, even if they failed in the early 1990s. And the U.S. will not be totally absent, I'm convinced of that.

Q: Well, then you went there as chief of mission to the OSCE?

BEECROFT: I was head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Q: With the rank of ambassador?

BEECROFT: Correct.

Q: You were there from when to when?

BEECROFT: I was there from July 2001 until July 2004.

Q: When you got there, well, what was the situation when you got there?

BEECROFT: Well, all of the major players were still there, and they were there in force. SFOR had gone down from 60,000 at its peak, of whom 28,000 were Americans, to a force of 20,000 of whom 10,000 were Americans. As I've said, the UN discredited itself in the eyes of Bosnians of all stripes in the '90s, so it was there only in very specific, limited functions. The UNHCR handled refugee issues. The UNDP did development, but so did a lot of other players. The UNIPTF did police training, although it later handed that off to the European Union. The UNHCHR acted as a human rights watchdog, but so did the OSCE Mission on a much larger scale. Naturally, the Office of the High Representative, OHR, which is *not* a UN organization, was and remains the lead international presence. Dayton Annex 10 designates OHR as "the final authority in theater."

Q: Who is the OHR?

BEECROFT: There have been four high representatives since the OHR was established in December of 1995. Carl Bildt, a former Swedish prime minister, was the first. The second was Carlos Westendorp, a Spaniard of Dutch parentage who has just become the Spanish Ambassador to Washington. The third was Wolfgang Petritsch, an Austrian of Slovenian parentage who had some understanding of the region; he is now the Austrian Ambassador to the

UN offices in Geneva. The fourth took over the job in June 2002: Lord Paddy Ashdown, former British army commando officer in Malaysia, former head of the British Liberal Democratic Party, close to Tony Blair. A Northern Irishman, he understands this kind of political environment. As far as I'm concerned – and I've got a lot of company in this– Paddy is hands down the best of the four.

Q: Now, when you got there, what was the OSCE doing?

BEECROFT: The OSCE Mission was doing several things that it had not been doing when it set up shop at the end of '95. Its mandate and mission have evolved. First of all, it's the largest OSCE Mission anywhere. As an organization, the OSCE has 19 missions, from the Balkans to central Asia. When I got there, the Bosnia Mission numbered over 800 people. It's now down to about 700, and two-thirds of its employees now are Bosnians. The OSCE is actually one of three international organizations with specific mandates in the Dayton Accords, the other two being OHR and NATO. The Mission's original mandate was to organize and manage elections. Between September '96 and the election of 2002, we organized six elections, each of which was very successful. Unfortunately it was sort of "the operation was successful, but the patient died, because the hardliners kept getting re-elected.

Q: The wrong people won.

BEECROFT: And that's an important lesson learned about the importance of stability and confidence in the rule of law. Elections alone won't solve your problem. Before she'll take a chance on the future and vote for change, Granny has to have confidence that she can walk down to the corner store and buy a loaf of bread without being robbed or shot at. If you don't have that, you don't have enough. By the time I got there in 2001, the Mission knew that we were down to one election before handing off election responsibilities to the Bosnian Central Election Commission, which is now up and running and is doing fine. A second thing we did, and are still doing, is refugee returns. The OSCE Mission had, and still has, the largest international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Four regional centers and 24, now 22, field offices, in addition to our headquarters in Sarajevo. We covered the territory better than any other civilian agency. When it came to refugee returns, I'm tempted to say we wrote the book. UNHCR obviously had a major role because it does this kind of work all over the world. We worked hand and glove with them, but we had the bodies on the ground, they didn't. We had the lawyers, they didn't. The lawyers in our Department of Human Rights realized that if you want people to come home, you don't do it by making property claims a matter for the courts. If you do that, things get hung up, especially with a judiciary that is both incompetent and corrupt. You may never get your property back that way. Instead, we developed administrative offices around the country who had the property registers and the cadastres going back to pre-1992, pre-war. We were able to keep a close eye on these offices. They were manned by Bosnian citizens, but their sole job was to identify property ownership, and then work with the local police to kick out squatters or find family they could move in with. You don't rate sympathy just because you are living in a house that belongs to somebody else. Of course this was a particular problem in the former Yugoslavia, where there was this concept of what's called "socially owned property." That means that if you worked for the government, or for a state-owned company, you got a flat, you got an apartment and you also got a pretty strong claim to keeping it, even if you stopped working for that company. We had to

decide really delicate questions of ownership -- if you lived in a socially owned flat that was allocated to you by the socialist enterprise you worked for, is that the same thing as owning it? More often than not, the decision was yes because it's as close as you could come to private property in a socialist system. The OSCE Mission's lawyers wrote the property laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There'd never been property laws in a western sense before. All in all, refugee return was a big deal and has been a big success.

Q: Well, tell me, I go back to my time looking at Derventa, when I saw flat piles of houses they said, oh, that belongs to a Muslim. This is my Serb guide. They were the ones that had Muslim claimed Bosniak claimants they were just gone flat.

BEECROFT: Oh, it went beyond that. I know that area. There are still a lot of flattened houses there. You could tell by looking at it whether a house had been blown up by a projectile coming from outside or landmine placed inside. If somebody had planted a mine -- and this was quite common -- the house would implode it would fall in on itself. If a house had been hit by, say, an anti-tank missile, it would explode, fragment. Out of the two million-odd refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one million have returned and claimed their properties. In some cases, yes, all they found was rubble. In many cases, they'd work out exchange deals. In some cases, they found a house they would have to rehabilitate. Not all of them are ever going to come back. This is a country that lost a quarter of its population, but ironically compared with a lot of the rest of the world, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a success story. Some Bosnians thought of the war as a great cause. Most of them thought it was a disaster. In a case like this, there's only so much the international community can do, and I think this is one lesson we should never forget: Keep it practical. Don't feel guilty if you can't re-create the status quo ante. You didn't start it. You just have to do your best to fix it. Now we have a million returnees, a million people out of four million who have claimed their properties. By the way, most of them came back on their own, so-called spontaneous returns, after the year 2000. Why then? That's when the rule of law began to take hold. The returnees had security. There have been very few cases of Muslim houses torched or Serbs shot at in a Bosniak area. It isn't just Bosniaks that have come back, it's Serbs and Croats as well.

Q: How about the Serbs in Krajina?

BEECROFT: What you've got there is a cross-border problem, Croatia vs. Bosnia, that is exacerbated by the fact that Croatia would like to pretend it's not part of the Balkans at all. They argue: "We're Catholics, we're Western, we're going to be in Europe soon, we're going to be in NATO soon. We are not a Balkan country." Well, it doesn't take you long to see how very Balkan most of Croatia is -- whatever Balkan means. My mantra has been "Balkans is as Balkans does" and boy, did the Croatians behave like Balkans. Krajina is the perfect example. It's part of Croatia, but there were thousands of Serbs there, and during the war they tried to create their own little Serb republic. They weren't angels either, far from it. In areas like Benkovac, there were overwhelming Serb majorities. Okay. In 1994, the Croatians and Bosnian Croat forces fighting with them, joined forces with the Bosniaks and launched what they called Operation Storm. By that time, the Croatians and the Bosniaks had a lot of weapons. They not only pushed the Serbs out of Krajina, they kept right on going northeast. If NATO had not intervened, they would have captured Banja Luka, and the Serbs would have been very likely pushed out of large

parts of Bosnia. That would have laid the groundwork for irredentist claims to justify the next war. So the U.S. made clear its view that the Croatians and Bosniaks should not to push on to Banja Luka – and they stopped the offensive. Okay, so now what do you have? You have around 20,000 Krajina Serbs in the Republika Srpska with claims in Kriena. It's highly likely that most of them will never go home. Meanwhile, in Krajina, you have Croats living in these Serbs' houses. Many of those Croats used to live in Derventa or in Banja Luka. You're talking about a de facto uneven swap, in which four or five thousand former RS Croats are living in the houses of Krajina Serbs. The rest of those houses have been allocated to homeless Croats from other areas. To make it more complicated, and this is something I got very involved in, the property laws are different in Croatia from what they are in Bosnia. In Croatia, the definition of ownership most often applies to the current tenant. Now, obviously, the current tenant is likely to be a Croat therefore the Croatian authorities give him or her a wink and say, you can stay there. In Bosnia and Herzegovina – and, I would add, in Serbia -- the owner is defined as the last person to live in the house before the war. If that criterion were applied in Croatia, a house might well revert to a Krajina Serb who is now in Banja Luka. Actually a case was brought to the European Court of Justice in Strasbourg, by a Serb woman who had a house in Zadar, Croatia. She didn't make her case very well and was turned down, but I think there will be more claims along these lines. Croatia has unfinished business. I went to Zagreb for my farewell calls there in April or May of this year and said to them, "You've got to do better." By the way, the European Union knows this. They have conditioned Croatia's membership on an equitable and just settlement of this problem, and that's fine. Meanwhile, the Germans are pushing hard to finesse the problem and get them in the EU pronto.

Q: How did you find within the OSCE the cooperation?

BEECROFT: Before we get to that, there were other things we did. We had a department that did nothing but monitor and support the free press. We were helping develop a free press. I closed that department down a few months after I arrived, because it had basically done its job. The press in Bosnia and Herzegovina is lively, noisy, scrappy and a often fun. It certainly is under nobody's thumb. They don't know enough yet about reliable sources, but they're getting there. We also had a terrific democratization department, and they are still going strong. We are helping, at both the state level and the municipal level, to build governments that are responsive to people, not the other way around. There was no such thing as a help desk in any city hall in Bosnia, for example. There was no concept on the part of mayors about how to allocate tax receipts, because the ingrained habit was to call Belgrade and ask for more money. Well, Belgrade's not there any more, so they're now learning about funding and building a budget. Then there's education reform. Bosnia and Herzegovina was, and to some extent still is, a country with schools where textbooks look like something out of Mississippi in 1963 – if you don't belong to our ethnic group, you're inferior. Segregation was everywhere, but based on ethnicity, not race. The OSCE Mission changed that, pressing for curriculum reform, textbook review, integrated classrooms, and local control of schools. Education reform was one of the things we did that I'm proudest of.

We also had a military reform department, headed by a retired British two-star general. The OSCE Mission supported the combining of the three former warring factions into a single military force with a single ministry of defense. That, let me tell you, was no small achievement.

Finally, we put together a small team of international auditors as a sort of a flying squad. They would go unannounced into publicly owned corporations and audit the books. This was all done in close cooperation with Lord Ashdown. We both had an interest in rooting out corruption. There was this unholy alliance of religious authorities, hardline politicians and mafias. They were sucking the life out of these corporations. This flying squad of a half a dozen people turned out to be invaluable. On issues like corruption and education, we had a symbiotic relationship with Paddy Ashdown.

Q: How did you find, you know, I mean when the UN was there you had the French going off with their way and the Americans, I mean the British. It was not well done at all. How was coordination between the various groups?

BEECROFT: I worked really hard on this. When I got there, my deputy was a German, and he was due to leave in 2002. He left in the summer of 2002 and went to Afghanistan. I needed a successor and it had to be European. There are two American heads of OSCE missions; I'm one and the other is in Kiev. For my new deputy, I was considering two countries in order to keep the balance and the money flowing: France and Russia. So I went separately to the French ambassador and the Russian ambassador in Sarajevo in the spring of 2002 and said, "Would you check with your capital and see if you've got somebody with ambassadorial rank who would like to be my deputy?" And they both came back with good candidates. After doing a little sounding in Vienna, I said, "I'll take them both." For the next year, I had both a French deputy and a Russian deputy, and we got along very well. Our flanks were covered. It immunized us to the pettiness of Vienna and the sometimes fractious relations among Washington and Moscow and Paris. Each of them had a part of the pie; it was a good division of responsibilities. My Russian deputy had been Ambassador in Peru and knew a lot about terrorism; that turned out to be very valuable because he had written a book on Fujimori and knew a lot about the shining path. When Washington and the EU began to focus on Bosnia because of the Al Qaeda connection, he was very useful.

My French deputy was an expert on political-military affairs who had served in Washington. He oversaw the education reform portfolio in its initial phases, and did a fine job. In 2004, when I left Sarajevo, he became France's bilateral Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It wasn't particularly onerous, but I made it a point of consulting periodically with Paris and Moscow, meeting with key officials in both capitals. They didn't micromanage me.

Q: From what you say I gather that your real problem was sort of the bureaucracy in Vienna?

BEECROFT: Oh, yes. Imagine a bureaucracy made up of people from 55 member states. They know that what makes the organization special is its field missions. Guess what they want to do? They want to help. Well, the best help they could give me was letting me run the mission. The way OSCE is set up, the Head of Mission is the final arbiter, but the bureaucracy in Vienna does everything they can to nibble away at that. At the end if the day, though, whether it's budget issues or selection of staff, it was my call. Fortunately I had a marvelous chief of staff, an Irishman. Now I know what blarney really means. This is a guy who had been, for the better part of 20 years, a lawyer in the Irish army judge advocate corps. He had the most wonderful stiletto

and he used it with great care. He knew the Vienna headquarters like the back of his hand. He would go up there and poke around report, "Okay, this is what the next ticking time bomb is." I found that the best way to immunize myself, in addition to my two deputies, was to meet and brief the ambassadors of the OSCE states in Sarajevo and have them report back to capitals. OSCE has 55 member countries, and 29 of them had ambassadors in Sarajevo. I got together on a regular basis with the American and the Canadian and the Dutchman and the Belgian and the Frenchman and the Russian and Norwegian, you know, the whole list from, you know the motto of OSCE, "from Vancouver to Vladivostok." They would come to the OSCE Mission headquarters and my staff and I would give them a detailed briefing. I made sure that we included enough detail so they realized we were very busy and doing useful things, and that the most important thing they could do was to get their countries to provide us with good staff. This is how OSCE works, but it's also how the UN and NATO work. It's all about filling slots. Every country wants to make sure that it's appropriately represented.

On a given day, the Italian Ambassador might come in and say, "Bob, you know, you don't have any Italians as head of a regional center right now. We have a really good candidate." And he's leave me his candidate's CV. Here was where you could play Vienna off against Sarajevo. The applications went through Vienna, but I had the final decision. Vienna was obliged to do two things, recommend people whom they felt were worthy, and then stand back. But Vienna had to send me all the names, not just the ones they liked. I saw every applicant for every staff-level job. This took a lot of time, and you had to strike a balance. Shortly before I left, I selected the first Turkish head of a regional center. This man used to be the legal advisor to the prime minister, but when the government changed they were looking for a place to put him. He's great. We never had a Turk do this before. I had to be careful to put a Turk in a place where there were not only Muslims but Serbs, and I did that. The assignment process is like a conveyor belt -- people coming in, people leaving.

The other thing that became clear is that some countries play this game better than others. The U.S. plays it very well. We contract out, so that most of our people sign a contract with a private company to work for OSCE. I was the exception, because I was seconded by Washington directly to the OSCE. The Brits are superb at the personnel game. The Canadians are also good. The Germans aren't bad, but there are some -- the French, the Italians, the Spanish, the Russians -- who don't have this knack. What you get from them is either people who are very senior, usually retired, or people who are very junior and don't care about being paid very much, but there's a great big gap in the middle. I had very few mid-level Frenchmen or mid-level Italians, but I had a French head of regional center who was a retired general and he was terrific. This is another one of these wrinkles in learning to play the staffing game, which is a big part of heading any international mission.

Q: What was your impression of the growing governing class in Bosnia?

BEECROFT: They were moving too slowly. That's one reason I was pushing so hard on the successor generation. If you look at the faces now in power at the end of 2004, I can count on the fingers on one hand people who were involved in politics in 1996, or even 1991. Many of them not only fought the war, but they helped start the war. This has got to be a lesson learned for future engagements. You have to force new faces forward faster than we did. Some government

structures are taking hold quite well. There's a single military, not three "former warring factions." Foreign policy is developed from the center, not from Banja Luka; in 1996, the Republika Srpska had its own "foreign minister," but no longer. There's now an agreed common core curriculum for schools, even though you still have thirteen education ministers, which is eleven too many. It's a mixed picture, but there are at least the outlines of a sense of state, which is what I like to call it: yes, we are Croats, we are Bosniaks, we are Serbs, but our passport says Bosnia and Herzegovina and whether we like it or not, that's home.

Q: Were you seeing a certain, was it a new generation coming in, was it beginning to gel did you feel?

BEECROFT: Yes. I did feel that. It was uneven, the new generation was up against resistance from entrenched forces -- mafia, or religious, or governmental. Those forces have their piece of the pie, and they don't want to lose it. That's why we focused so intently on the successor generation initiative: identify the comers, push them up, encourage them.

Q: How did you find the Republika Srpska integrating?

BEECROFT: A lot better than I ever would have dreamt of in 1996, in spite of the fact that Karadžić is still seen as a folk hero in the deep valleys and dark forests. If you go to the town of Prijedor today, you can't believe it. Prijedor in 1992 and 1993 was home to the Omarska camp, arguably the most horrible concentration camp in Europe since Auschwitz. Today, Prijedor's minarets and mosques have been rebuilt. Prijedor is in the Republika Srpska. Many Bosniaks who used to live near Prijedor are back. If you go to Banja Luka, you don't see a whole lot of Cyrillic any more, because when you're online you're using the Latin alphabet. Both the University of Banja Luka and the Banja Luka business college are doing well. If you go to the worst parts of the eastern RS, Foća for example, the mayor of Foća is a decent and tolerant man who has worked hard and successfully to get the Bosniaks to come back. The mosque has been rebuilt in Foća. It, and every mosque in the eastern RS, were flattened during the war.

Q: Oh, yes. Well, you know in the '90s, during the war, Europe was flooded with young people just from the area of all types just getting the hell out. This wasn't their thing and they often were, I mean they just, they were waiting on tables in Berlin or what have you.

BEECROFT: Correct. Now they own restaurants.

Q: Was there an incoming or not?

BEECROFT: Some came back, some didn't. As usual it's a mixed picture. My secretary and personal assistant, for example, a wonderful woman. She went to high school in Texas during the war. She speaks English like a Texan. She's now come home. She had family and she came back, but some members of her family didn't. So it will never be what it was, but it will never be as bad as it might have been.

End of reader