

DENMARK

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GEORGE L. WEST
Consular Officer
Godthab (Nuuk), Greenland (1940-1942)

George L. West was born in Seattle, Washington in 1910. He received a bachelor's degree from Stanford University in 1933. His Foreign Service career included positions in Paris, Godthab, Stockholm, Helsinki, Luxembourg,

Frankfurt, and Bonn. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 9, 1990.

Q: That was the idea. You went out. These were all big posts; it's a good place to get some training.

WEST: Well, they weren't big posts, necessarily. A lot of them were small border posts. They didn't want to invest any more money than they had to in you. Also, they brought you back to the school, normally, after about a year.

Since they actually brought both groups... The group that went out in July, new budget year... This was a familiar time to get assigned and be sworn in. We were a total of 23 in this Foreign Service school.

At the time, I was engaged and didn't want an immediate assignment abroad until I'd gotten married.

As a result of that and getting one hundred in the visa examination, I was assigned prematurely to the Visa Division (it was VD then, now it's VO, Visa Office, which is a slight improvement). I was settling down in that when Denmark was occupied.

Q: This was World War II.

West: Yes. We were not in it, but Denmark was occupied. Roosevelt immediately decided we had to do something about Greenland.

It was put partly on a humanitarian basis, that they were entirely dependent on Denmark for their supplies. Mr. Berle was put in charge of this project. The President had pointed out, in one of his fireside radio talks, that Greenland was essentially North American, that the fauna and flora were North American, the natives were North American. At any rate, we were rushed up there. I say, we, an acquaintance of mine, whom I'd also known in college, was sent up there. When they decided to send somebody up, they got a fairly senior officer, who was a bit of an elegant type. He was called in to Berle's office to say what his plans were.

Q: This is Adolf Berle.

WEST: Yes, at the title of Assistant Secretary, I think. I'd gotten to know him while I was in the school, actually. In those days, you came in the school and were entertained at the White House; you called on all the Assistant Secretaries, and all that. It was a smaller service, naturally.

He was called into Berle's office and asked what his plans were for the consulate. He said, well he thought he would...

Q: This was the consulate at Godthab.

WEST: Perhaps I'm jumping too far ahead. [On April 9, 1941] The United States made an agreement with Henrik Kauffmann, who was the Danish Minister in Washington, whereby he did not recognize the authority of the German occupied power in Denmark. And he made this agreement whereby we, among many other things, took over responsibility for supplying the country. There were other factors involved besides relief. That was recognized by the Red Cross sending a man up with us, Mr. Reddy of the Red Cross.

Let me go back. The big item there was the cryolite mines. Cryolite, people are not too familiar with it; I certainly wasn't. It is a mineral; the only commercial deposits in the world are up in Greenland. It was mined by a government company, or quasi-government Danish company, with Danish miners. It was on a fjord.

The two principal North American customers were Penn Salt [?] Company of Philadelphia and the Aluminum Company of Canada. The other was strictly a defense thing. One of the first things in the order was the use of Greenland, if possible, to ferry aircraft to the British, that is going from Newfoundland to Greenland to Iceland.

Q: Airplanes in those days had a much shorter range.

WEST: Otherwise you had to go by ship. Maybe I'm telescoping this a little too much. We went up on the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard had a lot of experience in Alaskan waters, as they have more recently with the Exxon experience [in Alaska]. We went up on the Coast Guard partly because they were willing and able, and the Army and Navy were arguing who should be in charge.

We were given the house of the sole doctor, Danish doctor, in Greenland. In the preliminary arrangements, Mr. Hugh Cumming, who was on the desk at the time, didn't know whether it was furnished or not.

So I was authorized by the department (I think this is probably a unique experience) to go up to Abercrombie and Fitch and buy certain cots and things of that sort, plus all winter equipment: skis, snow shoes. I got nice cashmere underwear, nice cashmere pajamas for Penfield and myself. And such things as Coleman lamps and cots, chairs. The rest of it we did with packing cases, for the time being. I guess I'm the only one that ever had a free charge at Abercrombie and Fitch.

After we'd been there awhile, we'd had a Sears and Roebuck house shipped up, that is, all the parts, and it was constructed by a Greenland carpenter. We also had put in batteries and a wind charger.

Once, in the dead of winter when there was a hundred-mile gale, the thing broke loose, and I went out to put on the brakes. It was not far from the house. Next to it we had a little building where we had all of our batteries. There was a little space between that little house and our house.

Coming back, I got swept off my feet. This was the first winter just after my boss had left. I broke my leg. I was swept off my feet into the flagpole, a couple hundred yards, and had to crawl back to the lee of the house and get into the house. I had to cut open my boot because it was

swelling so much. I got in, got on the sofa, took off my belt, wrapped it around the pillow, and sat there pleading [?] between the light to get some attention. We had no telephones.

Sure enough, the boy from the telegraph office, who came down to deliver some telegrams, saw the light.

There was no doctor in South Greenland at that time, but they took me into this little infirmary. These Greenland nurses pulled the damn thing straight on me and put me in bed with just sandbags around it and pulleys.

I had to move all of my codes down there. We devised a Greenland code for use with all the Army, Navy, Air Force, ourselves, and the Greenland government, based on the Brown Code.

At any rate, one of first things was the cryolite mine. In fact, we put in there first. A quick arrangement was made whereby some of the...

I should explain that this mine was right on the edge of a fjord. In fact, the mine to some extent went under the fjord. It was the sort of thing where it wouldn't take much to knock the edge of it off and to flood that thing, either by air or by sea.

So the Coast Guard supplied some petty officers. They made a blind guard and they had some anti-aircraft weapons and whatnot. It was just a small detachment. Then we proceeded up to Godthab.

At that time, there were two governors of Greenland: one of South Greenland, one of North Greenland. Godthab was the capitol, if you wish, (it had about four hundred people) of South Greenland.

The Governor was close to retirement. Although he had an American wife, he didn't go all out for this. He was rather nervous. He was worried about his retirement when the Germans had won the war. So we sort of induced him to go down to New York.

The cryolite ships that used to ply between Denmark and Greenland were then put on the run to Philadelphia. The Governor of North Greenland became the effective [?] in charge.

We did a number of things, initially. One of the biggest problems was that the Germans and the Norwegian Quislings were landing meteorological parties on the east coast of Greenland; the east coast being largely uninhabited except for a few trappers.

It seems that a lot of your weather for Western Europe originates up on that icecap. It's invaluable, from a military standpoint, to get meteorological reports from there.

So we went around to the Coast Guard, and we'd find these places and destroy them. Once we took a [German?] ship, and (we were not in the war, mind you) they escorted this ship, practically towed it, into Boston harbor. The crew was arrested for entering without visas and interned for the duration of the war. Although as I say, this was still before Pearl Harbor.

One of the big projects was to find some places where we could put in some airfields (and I do mean fields). Greenland is, as you probably know, mostly ice, with a lot of rocks around the edge of the icecap.

One of my jobs was to go with a joint Army-Navy group to explore for possible sites. Well we did find one site, way up at the north. It was designated Blue Wessy [?].

But the best site in the south, which was where we wanted to be primarily, was down on the southwest coast in Tunuliarfik Fjord, which was actually called by the Danes Eric's Fjord.

It's where Eric was supposed to have landed and named it Greenland because there were some willow bushes around there. There are no trees in Greenland, and there's not much else.

There was a glacial moraine there, which, although it had a pretty good pitch, looked as if it was a possible field.

The Army engineer was a man named Gerlenski. He described the surface of it as "gravel." Well, in the long run it proved that, although there was a little gravel on the top, you got down a bit and you had these, I'm not showing any racial bias, but they're referred to as "nigger heads." They're small boulders, which subsequently were known as "Gerlenski gravel."

At any rate, they had an awful time getting equipment ashore. They should have put in a pier as the first thing they did. But we had ships, so many ships there you had to unload them by lighter. All kinds of ships were sent up with heavy equipment. They were stuck there sometimes for over a month just because of the tempestuous weather. Actually, when December of '41 came along, I was on a banana boat in that harbor, drinking a rum and cola, when we heard the news of Pearl Harbor.

I should go back and mention that we did an awful lot of travel up and down the coast, lining things up. My boss went out in the late fall of '40 to go down to the States before the ice pack came in.

The ice pack comes around from the east to the west and then up the west coast. Godthab, for example, is inaccessible by ships for several months of the year.

So I was left there in charge. Incidentally, the Canadians had also sent a Consul and Vice Consul up there, recognizing their natural interests and the aluminum companies' interest in it.

And so I spent the first winter there. The Canadian Vice Consul was actually a Scotsman, a marine biologist from McGill. We did quite a study of the fisheries; I did the commercial aspects of it. This was the chief support of the island during the war.

There had been a small crab cannery, but the crabs had disappeared, so we converted it to shrimp. It was with a good deal of pride that when I came back to the States I'd go into Safeway and see "Produce of Greenland." They'd had little glass jars.

The big thing was the sale of their cod. It used to be that a lot of the cod was shipped to the Mediterranean countries.

The Portuguese, themselves, did a lot of fishing. In fact, up in North Greenland in Ngelaund [?] I went aboard a Portuguese fishing... They have a big mother ship. It's a hospital that is loaded with sardines going up, and those are used as chum to cast. They had a fleet of about 30 or 40 smaller vessels. The mother ship did all the meteorological work in the shipping.

It was quite an operation. They were still operating during the war. The reason they put in (they normally were not permitted to come in) was just to bury a man and, incidentally, to get some fresh water. They had a priest and all that. I tasted all the ports, the green ports.

So there was a great market for the cod, and particularly though, for the liver oil, not only cod liver, but halibut liver. These drew a terrific premium. They did great with them in the States. A lot of the cod went on to the West Indies, Spanish-speaking countries.

The base eventually became operative. An awful lot of planes were lost flying from Newfoundland because of the storms. We established a meteorological system, with people taking recordings every day. I used to put up a balloon every day. This was a fascinating experience.

Q: You were there until 1942, is that right?

WEST: I came down on a plane in spring of '42, just about two years after I'd first come up -- and left in very Arctic conditions. We had a hard time landing at Goose Bay because of all the snow and then came into a sweltering Washington, D.C., where I stayed for some time.

I was put on loan to the Navy, partly because after two years in Greenland I'd lived in Greenland longer than had any other American, and most recently was most familiar with a lot of the conditions up there.

Then I got an assignment, through Mr. Cumming, to Sweden. Of course I might say that originally they'd been saying, "Well, you'll go up for six months," but I'd spent two years up there. Well, I went to Stockholm.

C. GRAY BREAM
Consular Officer
Godthab (Nuuk), Greenland (1942-1944)

Born in Indiana in 1914, C. Gray Bream graduated from Midland College in 1936 and earned an MA and a PhD from the University of Chicago. Bream joined the Foreign Service in 1941 and served overseas in Nova Scotia, Greenland, Sweden, Pakistan, Amsterdam and Germany. He also worked in the Bureau of

*Intelligence and Research as well as the Arms Control and Development Agency.
Bream was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1995.*

Q: Yes, that was the system. In the summer of 1942 you left?

BREAM: The summer of 1942 I got a telegram saying report to Godthab Greenland. Nothing about how to get there, just a signed transfer to Godthab [in southeast] Greenland. I went to Washington to see what could be done and it was then incidentally that I had gotten the yellow fever shots. I had forgotten them when I went to Halifax. A very painful experience, I was sicker than a dog for a day after that. All I got were instructions to go to an airbase in Maine, I went up there by train, and there I was told that I could take a plane up to Goose Bay and Labrador and from there another plane would go up to Greenland and from there I would somehow or another find my way up to Godthab.

Q: Godthab is quite north isn't it? Where is Godthab?

BREAM: Not that far north. It was about a third of the way up the [eastern] coast. Do you want all of this story about Greenland?

Q: Yes, yes I do. I try to get back to that era.

BREAM: Well, there I was, I knew nothing. I hitchhiked a ride from that base in Maine. I'll never forget, I walked into the Operations Office and I had some kind of papers to indicate my assignment and that the military was supposed to look after me I guess. The chap sitting across from me looked at me for a little while and said "Excuse me." He left the room and he was gone for about 10 minutes and he came back and he said "There's some question about that ring that you're wearing." I had an Indian ring with a Indian swastika on the side of it and he wanted an explanation of why I was wearing a ring with a swastika on it. [laughter] I explained it to his satisfaction. We flew to Gander and from there to South Base and from there I caught a Coast Guard ice breaker that was going up the [southwest] coast and delivered me to Godthab. At the time the war broke out, or rather at the time that Denmark was occupied, I should say...

Q: That would have been in the spring of 1940.

BREAM: Yes. Greenland was cut off, the colony of Greenland was very tightly administered from Denmark. They had two districts. There was North Greenland and there was South Greenland and each one had an official designated as Governor. I should add that all of the supplies for Greenland - sugar, flour, everything came from Denmark and everything produced there, which didn't amount to much besides dried codfish, went back to Denmark. With the war, that was cut off. The supervision of Denmark passed to the Danish ambassador in Washington and they set up a purchasing agency in New York. They brought the Governor of North Greenland down to supervise that operation and then made the Governor of South Greenland the head of the whole operation in Greenland. He was stationed in Godthab.

Our interest in Greenland was of two kinds: one, I don't recall or never really knew all of the details of this, was the idea that we should establish air bases there so that if England fell the

remnants of its air force could be evacuated by way of Greenland, New Finland or Iceland to the United States. As it turned out, England didn't fall. As a matter of fact, the bases weren't completed in time to enable it to be of any help. The bases were maintained there and then the idea became that we could ferry planes from the U.S. to England. That was tried without much success. In fact, I knew of two flights that went through there, P- 38s which had no guidance systems, they were being shepherded by a larger plane, a C- 54 I think, they got separated in a storm and a number of the planes were lost, so they gave up on that operation.

Furthermore, in a place called Avigaat [in southeast] Greenland, there was a cryolite mine. Cryolite was a very odd sort of mineral which was found in only a couple of other places in the world. One place, I think, was in Arizona. At the time it was used as a flux in the refining of aluminum, and was also used for the enamel on kitchen pots and oddly enough as an insecticide. But the main use was for refining aluminum. This was critical because we were just developing aluminum production and we needed that cryolite for the flux in the refining of the aluminum. Later they developed a synthetic substitute. During the war, cryolite was critical. There was even concern that the Germans might try to take this over. If not for their own use, at least to cut off [supplies to] the U.S. So we maintained an artillery establishment at Avigaat, manned by about 500 men. We had a base at South Base, in North Base, and another base on the east coast on Greenland at Angmagssalik, which was primarily a weather station. The consulate in Greenland functioned as a liaison between the local administration and the military. That was about all we did.

Q: How did you find the local establishment there?

BREAM: Godthab itself had a population of several hundred, probably 45 or 50 Danes. They had a little hospital there with a Danish doctor and several Danish nurses, a Danish church with a pastor and his wife, a Danish school teacher, and then the Mayor of the town and a manager of the store which handled the supplies of the Greenlanders and so forth. The rest of the population were called Greenlanders. Most of them had some mixture of Scotch and Danish from 300 years before. We didn't call them Eskimos there. They were Greenlanders. At the time I arrived, we had a consul, a vice consul whom I replaced [he had already departed], and then a clerk. There were the three of us there. The consul was replaced a few months later by another man.

Q: How long were you there?

BREAM: I was there for a total of two years. A little over two years, but while I was there, I went on home leave. I got back to Casper, Wyoming, and I had an appendectomy. Then I hitchhiked my way back to Greenland, but I spent three months getting to my post. I think I set a record en route to post. When I got from Washington to the South Base in Greenland, but from there it was another story. This was in the winter time. I got as far as Avigaat which was where the cryolite mine was and I was there for six weeks and finally an ice breaker came through and took me up to a little emergency landing field which had been established 50 miles south of Godthab, and from there I was picked up by a local motor boat which took me to Godthab. I've been three months en route from Washington to Godthab. [laughter] Needless to say, I wasn't really needed.

Q: It doesn't sound like there was much going on. Don't I recall story about a German meteorologist there?

BREAM: We had one flap. A German meteorologist was floating around East Greenland, moving around by dog sled apparently, and we were called upon in connection with the local administration in Greenland to arrange for somebody to go over and look for this character. As I recall, they never found him but it was quite a flap for awhile. We also had another occasion when a flying boat, PBY, a Catalina, I guess they were, was flying down the coast to Greenland in foggy weather and they flew right into the edge of the icecap and stuck there. The plane was undamaged. They were just stuck, propeller's going around and they weren't going anywhere. [laughter] We were called upon again by the local administration to get a dog team to come down from the north and bring these guys off of the icecap. It turned out that before the dog team could get there, they figured out where they were. It was just a few miles from Avigaat and they walked out on their own power. [laughter]

Q: It must have been a little bit difficult to keep up one's spirit and everything else, by sitting out there.

BREAM: I was able to read War and Peace among other things. [laughter] I tried to maintain correspondence with friends in the United States. The turnaround was normally about three months. Because during the winter there was no contact by ship, the PBYs could come in, and did every few weeks, and they would take out our mail from reports to the Department such as they were. It was pretty isolated.

WALTER GALENSON
Labor Attaché
Oslo and Copenhagen (1945-1946)

Walter Galenson was born in 1914 and graduated from Columbia University in 1940 with a PhD in Science. Galenson held teaching positions at Harvard, University of California, Berkeley, Cornell, and Cambridge University and is a noted economist and labor politician. Galenson was stationed as a labor attaché at the American embassies in Norway and Denmark from 1945 to 1946 and was interviewed by Morris Weisz on March 15, 2002.

Q: Oh, you were reporting on Denmark also?

GALENSON: Both. I spent two weeks in each country. I went back and forth.

Q: Two weeks a month?

GALENSON: Yes. I got to know the people in the Social Democratic Party there and in the unions pretty well and so I had the same entree there as I did in Norway.

Q: *So you had your home in Oslo and...*

GALENSON: I had a small apartment in Copenhagen.

Q: *Oh, really. Those are pleasant experiences, although the economic conditions at the time were rather difficult.*

GALENSON: Well, I didn't suffer. I can tell you that.

Q: *Not for Embassy people. Any special comment about Denmark, Danish labor, and the differences [between Norway and Denmark]?*

GALENSON: Yes, the Danes were much less... They didn't have a revolutionary background like the Norwegians. They were never in the Comintern. They were a moderate Social Democratic Party from the start.

Q: *Had they [the Social Democratic Party] been in power anytime before the war?*

GALENSON: Yes, I think so.

Q: *And the Norwegians?*

GALENSON: Yes. There was a Labor Government in fact [in power] in Norway when the Germans came in. But they [the Danes] were much more moderate. Now, for example, the Norwegian labor movement was sort of puritanical; because of Tranmael, in a way, they didn't drink. When I first met him, Haakon wouldn't drink anything, whereas if the Danes hadn't been able to drink beer or snaps, they wouldn't have had any Danes, you know. A completely different atmosphere.

Q: *In that respect Sweden is closer to the Danes. God, they drink.*

GALENSON: Yes, they do. The Danes ate a lot, drank a lot, very gemütlich. So it was a great contrast...

Q: *They were more continental literally and figuratively.*

GALENSON: Yeah, that's right. They were more continental. The Norwegians were just a different kind of people. After all the Norwegian Labor Party had its roots in forestry workers and fishermen and construction workers, whereas in Denmark they were factory workers and craftsmen.

TERRENCE G. LEONHARDY
Consular Officer
Copenhagen (1945-1949)

Terrence George Leonhardy was born in North Dakota in 1914. After receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of North Dakota he received his master's degree from Louisiana State University. His career includes positions in Colombia, Denmark, Spain, Mexico, and El Salvador. Mr. Leonhardy was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in February 1996.

Q: Because we're talking about the war time, of course, so the supply of shells was limited.

LEONHARDY: I came down to Washington and talked to Walton C. Ferris and he said, "Well, we're thinking about assigning you to Europe somewhere, you know, after the War you'll be going in." He says, "We'll send a letter down." Well, I kept getting these different letters assigning me, first, to Naples and then to Warsaw, but I had to wait to go into Warsaw when things were propitious. And then they said first go to Naples, then London. And then they sent me up to the States working on a special project over behind the White House there. It was in a temporary building. Then I was interviewed again by Walton C. Ferris. Well, I had my dad get me all kinds of heavy clothes for Warsaw, Poland. He went into the local men's store and got all these heavy coats and jackets and stuff, while I started studying the Polish language - not taking formal lessons but I was studying Polish on my own. And then one day, I was flirting with a girl in an elevator that worked in the old Walker-Johnson building there (I'd met her at a party the night before) and I asked her if she was busy. She said, "Oh, I am terribly busy." I said, "Well, maybe I could come up and help you." I was just kidding her. The next thing I knew, I was getting a call from Walton C. Ferris and he said, "You know, her boss called me and said he thought you didn't have anything to do and he was looking for somebody." He says, "While I had your file out and (I'm trying to think of his name, he was Director of the Foreign Service) called and said he needed somebody in Denmark, Copenhagen. So I called Arthur Blisslane. He said he'd release you." Anyway, the next thing I knew - Ferris was very demanding - he said, "At such-and-such a time, you've got to go at such-and-such a place. So the assignment was changed to Copenhagen. So I went off to Copenhagen. I left New York on the last convoy going to Europe and I remember they gave me a foot locker full of those - you remember, those big thick regulations - heavy as hell. Plus my own personal effects. We get over to Cherbourg and we were supposed to be unloaded by German prisoners of war but for some reason, I don't know why, we stayed overnight onboard the convoy. The next day there weren't any prisoners of war but we had all these UNRRA (UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) people and Quakers and everything else plus State Department people. We stayed in... where there was an empty troop ship. We stayed up in the sickbay and then from there...

Q: Excuse me but when did you make your crossing?

LEONHARDY: It was in May. Just a few days after the war was over.

Q: May, '45 then.

LEONHARDY: As I say, we were in a convoy. The war was over but there were still subs around that hadn't gotten the word, I guess. So I had to take a full troop ship, but since they were gone on recreation over to England, we were left to sit around London and wait for them in order

to get out to Denmark. Finally, they shipped us up on a military plane up to Stockholm. The Embassy in Stockholm had got me on a train down to Malmo, Sweden. Then I took a ferry boat across and, I remember, I got ready to go on the ferry boat with all this luggage and stuff. When I went out the landing with a taxi and I had no Swedish currency left. And I thought, "How in the hell am I going to get this stuff on the boat?" I also didn't realize that I had to have a ticket to get onboard. But anyway, this ferry boat was full of Danish refugees - Jewish refugees - coming back from Sweden - so they had all these Swedish Boy Scouts out there helping them get on and they just took me along and put me on the ship too. And so I went into Copenhagen and I was met by a friend of mine who lives over here in Virginia - a Foreign Service officer.

Q: *Who's that?*

LEONHARDY: He's a guy you ought to interview probably - Gray Bream.

Q: *All right, I'll try to get him.*

LEONHARDY: He had an interesting career, too. He was a political officer at the Embassy.

Q: *Well, now, I always like to get at the beginning of an assignment. You were in Copenhagen from when to when?*

LEONHARDY: I was there from May of '45 to February of '49.

Q: *This was really a month or two after the German occupation had ended in Denmark. What was the situation in Copenhagen and Denmark when you arrived?*

LEONHARDY: Well, it was very interesting because when I got into the harbor of Copenhagen, I saw all these German boats, you know, with the black cross (the Iron Cross) on them. And there were still a lot of Danish underground people; members of the Resistance. All they had was armbands to identify themselves and they would take people off the streetcars once in a while, and so forth. And we were first housed in the office. First of all, where we resided, we were still under SHAFE (Allied Headquarters, Allied Forces Europe), under Eisenhower, and we were resided in the Hotel D'Angleterre which is still one of the oldest, fanciest hotels in Copenhagen. No hot water, however, and we ate (since we were under the British too) in a British mess. It was pretty tiresome stuff because it was lamb stew, you know, about twice a day but, at least, we were allowed to eat our breakfast in the main dining room. We could sign a chit for it and I was there for, or living in that circumstance, for about three or four months, I think it was. Although I was in the D'Angleterre, there was still nothing - at the restaurants, you had to use coupons for mostly everything, even to get an egg for breakfast. Everything was on ration and the Danes, I was told during the war, it was considered patriotic to eat all you could eat to keep it away from the Germans. But after the war it was unpatriotic to eat all you could eat because they had to export to get foreign currency to buy things they needed. And they were terribly short of coal, everything was heated by peat, which was brought in from the islands. It stunk to the high heavens and it was- (end of tape)

And we had no hot water even in the hotel. They would come with a big pitcher and pour it in the bathtub. That was true even when I left there in '49. We had hot water in the apartment buildings about one weekend a month. But anyway, housing was a real problem there, since the Danish housing control would only let somebody sublet for six months. Then you had to move someplace else. We were constantly out of touch with the Department. At the time, I was assigned to the consular section and Consul had never had any consular experience, so he was pretty dependent on me. Then we had nobody running the accounting section. We had some wonderful Danish employees, just top flight, that would been working - some of them were working with the Swiss, some of them were re-hired after the war. They were just terrific people who you could just rely on them, you know.

But anyway, I had to do the accounts, but I didn't do the job by myself; this guy had done it, but I was the responsible officer for the accounts, and for the visa section, and for the passport and citizenship section. One of the tough things we had at the time was we had about, oh, around fifty women, I'd say, who were mostly Americans that had married Danes before the war and received dual citizenship under Danish law. During the war the Germans tried to make a model satellite out of Denmark and they even had an election there in about '43, '44, I think it was. And the National Socialist Party, of course, the Nazi Party in Denmark, was on the ballot with candidates. And these women, or at least most of them, went in and, as Danish citizens, they voted for the opposition party to the Nazis. They thought that was their patriotic duty. Well, what they were doing is losing their citizenship.

When these women came in for citizenship services; they wanted to go back to Baltimore or New York for a visit after the war. I'd ask them, "Did you vote in the elections?" "Oh, sure I voted." I'd say, "I'm sorry, you've lost your citizenship" Anyway, we had to go through the throes of taking their citizenship away but, eventually, they got special legislation through Congress restoring it. It was a kind of a difficult situation, however, and I was in that consular section for a couple of years. In total, I was there for four years until I was moved up to the commercial section. I had a very valuable Danish employee at the time, he was very knowledgeable about his country, his English was passable, and we used to bombard the Department of Commerce and the State Department with a lot of economic reporting. Then I was lucky in another respect. Shortly after I got there, there was another fellow who was an auxiliary officer. He didn't last very long but he came in for about a year, I think. And we were able to get a Danish cook who, with her husband, had had a restaurant in Weehawken, New Jersey, before the war. After her husband died, she came back to Denmark, and got stranded by the war. She knew all kinds of American recipes and she had good connections with people, with suppliers of food, and so forth. She also knew a ship chandler's wife who furnished food for all the ships and Danish merchant marines. So I was very lucky; she was just a wonderful person and she kept house for my apartment, and did the cooking and everything else. Well, she was just a...

Q: Well, who was the Ambassador then?

LEONHARDY: Oh, the first Ambassador we had was Monette Davis that was the name I couldn't think a while ago. And he was in the Minister rank. Our first office was in the old Legation building, right near the National Palace and it was where Ruth Bryan Owen had been Minister to Denmark.

Q: The daughter of William Jennings Bryan.

LEONHARDY: And then Monette Davis was assigned as Consul General in Shanghai, I think, and then he was succeeded by a political ambassador, I can't think of his name, he was from Delaware [Editor: Josiah Marvel, Jr. took up his duties as Ambassador February 27, 1947]. His wife was the first wife of that famous financier, Jock Whitney. It was during this time that the Marshall Plan started, of course, and we had all this influx of people coming in to run that program. It's funny, the first head of the Marshall Plan was a guy named Marshall. Anyway, we moved from this small, old legation building which we couldn't even begin to fit into and we rented space in an office building that had been the Gestapo headquarters and had been blown up by the Resistance - a side of it had been blown off and was later repaired, and that's where we moved our office. We were there all the time; I was there all this...

My second apartment was within walking distance of the office and I walked by Hans Christian Andersen's statue every day in a park, and so forth. Then I had to get a new apartment because I had to move again, and I relocated out into the suburbs. During the first part of my assignment there, I got a car, a Chevrolet that was shipped. It cost me \$996, I mean a new Chevrolet out of the factory. I got that shipped over to me. So I did a lot of traveling around Denmark, and so forth - got to know the country.

Then it was very dreary up there and, of course, especially during the winter, the area was suffering from lack of heat. One winter it got so cold that they couldn't get the peat boats in, so they just turned the heat off and we got kerosene heaters from the Embassy. I had a fairly big apartment at the time, but still managed to heat up a couple of rooms. That was one of those smelly, old kerosene heaters. Then about springtime around March or April, I started having the feeling that I had to get out of there because we had been up there all winter, at the same latitude as Hudson's Bay, and hadn't see much daylight during that entire season - dreary. So I got on the Nordic Express and I went south. You had to take a train across from the Island of Sjaelland over to the mainland and then go down to Paris. It was a kind of a difficult trip because you'd have to get out at every border, get out of the gall darn train and go through customs, and so forth, and then get back on the train. And if I didn't see the sunshine in Paris, I'd just keep going until I got to Madrid. Then I drove down several times clear down into Italy, and so forth. Had some very interesting trips. But, I don't know if you have any other questions...

Q: On the consular work, the Danish Jews who came back from Sweden, were many of them heading for the United States or not?

LEONHARDY: Not at that time. They'd had their businesses and their homes, and I think they were real anxious to get resettled. One of the problems we had was that the Danish underground visa quota was very small and we had a waiting list a mile long and then we had a lot of visitor's visas we issued. Of course, there were no planes going across the Atlantic at the time and you had - everything was by ship. In fact, I went on home leave, my first home leave, I went over on the old *Gripsholm*, which was the exchange ship, and amongst the passengers was Greta Garbo. Then I came back on another Swedish... You had to go take a train up the coast to Gothenburg that was the main port. You had to go up there to catch the ship in that North Atlantic run. It was

about a ten day trip. Of course, since I don't get seasick, I enjoyed the trip but a lot of people... Then I came back on the *Dronningholm*. Both those ships were decommissioned not too long after that. Then I went over on the famous *Stockholm* that had the wreck with the *Andrea Doria*, the next time out. But it was a very pleasant assignment. The Danes did not encourage you to learn Danish; it happens to be a fairly ugly language. They have no tolerance for accents but I made an effort anyway. Most educated Danes took English from grade school up, and of course, they have their international language so it was not a problem. But I made a lot of Danish friends, enjoyed the...

The second Ambassador we had, the first Ambassador I should say, because Monette Davis was a Minister, was a guy named Josiah Marvel from Delaware. He was there until I had left. Our DCM at the time was a guy named Garrett Excursion who later went up in the Service and other places - a nice guy. But my first boss in the consular section - a guy named Sheldon Thomas - as I had already mentioned, hadn't done any consular work, and shortly after he was given the position - it wasn't more than about six months, I think, or eight months - he was reassigned to Iceland and then we didn't get a single consul general who knew what he was doing. It was about shortly thereafter that I went upstairs to the commercial section.

Q: What part did commercial work...? What were our commercial interests...?

LEONHARDY: Well, we had to do the standard reports you make on the companies - Danish companies. Then we did a lot of reporting. Well, out of Commerce, you know, they had crazy demands on you. One I'll never forget was the market for human hair in Denmark. You just got flooded with these requests. But we did it with the help of this able Danish assistant. We also did a thorough job on the Danish merchant marine. They wanted a report in Washington on that. We got a commendation for it, and so forth. But it was mostly these regular commercial reports that you do on - like Dun and Bradstreet - on the firms and stuff, we did a lot of that. There wasn't much commerce between the two countries at the time.

Q: Were you seeing at the beginning of something that became quite popular later, the Danish furniture market there?

LEONHARDY: Yes, they were beginning to... The Danes, of course, at that time were famous for their silverware, Georg Jensen of which I bought a set of while I was over there. They were famous for their two ceramic factories, Bing and Groendahl and the Royal Copenhagen. Interesting, in those days you had to have consular invoice for everything and if it was an original work of art, it was non-dutiable when it got to the States. I could have made all these little artists, old people out in Bing, Groendahl and Royal Copenhagen come into the Embassy and swear that they'd done this little bird or this little vase or something but, instead, I went out to the factory and delivered their oaths in person. I had to give them an oath in Danish so they wouldn't have to do that.

As far as recreation is concerned, we had a good group at the Embassy. They formed what they called a Chancery Club and they'd have a big dance. They'd rent a hall and they'd have all the Danish employees and American employees and we'd have a band. I remember Victor Borge came to one of our planned things and entertained for us. So we had a fairly good social life.

Then I did go to the... The Ambassador used to get these free tickets to the concert hall there where the First Symphony... And his secretary used to call me and say, "He doesn't want to use... Do you want to go?" I'd go to a lot of that. Then I'd go to the Royal Danish Ballet; it was the first time I ever got interested in ballet. I never went to ballet before I got there. So you had a lot of things to do to keep you busy.

Q: How were relations with the Danes during this period?

LEONHARDY: Well, very good, I'd say. When the Danish government was finally formed after SHAFE disappeared there, they were always... You can ask Gray Bream; he was the political reporter but I think they were very good, very friendly disposed. And Denmark, as you may know, is one of the few countries that has a Fourth of July celebration.

Q: I've heard of this.

LEONHARDY: It's over on the mainland and I went to one of those in a place called Rebild Jutland. They had the American flag flying and they have Fourth of July speeches and everything else. Of course, there are an awful lot of Danes that migrated to the States and there's a natural empathy there between the two countries so we never had any serious problems that I know of while I was there - any political problems.

Q: I assume that doing consular work, protection and welfare, wasn't a particular problem at the time?

LEONHARDY: Not big. We occasionally had a few things but most of the problems we had were with American seamen coming over and getting drunk and... Then the other things we used to do... We'd go to the "Land of Milk and Honey" which was Sweden; we'd catch the ferry boat over there and buy stuff. All the Danish employees would ask, "Can you buy me a shirt? Can you do this?" because everything was wide open over there, you know. You couldn't get anything in Denmark. I remember one of the first batches of oranges came in, people were in line. When chocolate came in, people were lined up for miles to get their ration of this stuff.

JOHN O. BELL
Economic Officer
Copenhagen (1952-1955)

John O. Bell was born in 1912 and attended George Washington University as undergraduate where he later received a law degree. He started his career at the State Department at age 19. Upon joining the Foreign Service, he served in Copenhagen, Karachi, and Guatemala among others. Arthur L. Lowrie interviewed him on June 17, 1988.

BELL: So I went to Copenhagen as Economic Officer. What gave me a little kudos was that the ECA was willing for me to be also Deputy Chief of the ECA Mission, the AID Mission. That

was because they knew me and I had worked with them. We had been working all the cables going out about AID economic and military and they had to be cleared with us. We were delegates of Presidential authority to coordinate the programs and I had worked on this for a year and a half, saying no you can't and yes you can. So, they knew me one way or another. This was the first time any Foreign Service Officer was going to do this--be a two-hat man. The AID Mission the State Department was very interested in, because they always wanted to grab it back. They were unhappy ever since it got away from them to start with. They wanted to have that program.

Off I went to Copenhagen and a very pleasant three years indeed. I got a lot more experience than I expected to. In the first place, the Deputy Chief of Mission was Harold Shantz, whom I had known before was away when I arrived but he had written me saying use my house until I get back. He had a government-owned house which was a beautiful place. We lived in that for about three months until Harold came back and then we rented a place. It was less than three months after that before Harold got named Minister to one of the Balkan States. So off he went and, much to my surprise, I was named to move up to be the Deputy Chief of Mission.

In the meantime, with regard to the Marshall Plan mission, the Chief of that was a man named Charlie Marshall, an older man, who was about 70 and I thought then that was really old, which it was, of course. When I arrived Mrs. Anderson, the Ambassador said, do you bring with you anything about the dual assignment? I said, no I didn't bring anything with me but it's all agreed to in Washington and I was briefed by ECA and there isn't any problem. She said, we haven't heard anything about it. I said, well I'm sure Mr. Marshall has heard something about it. She said what do we do? I said, don't do anything, just be calm. I met Mr. Marshall, he never said a word. He was pleasant enough, but he didn't say anything and I didn't say anything. We went on like that for about three weeks and he called me one day and said he was going down to Paris for a meeting of the Marshall Plan mission chiefs and would I like to go with him. I said, sure.

I told Mrs. Anderson that I was going to Paris with Mr. Marshall. It was a 24-hour ride on the train, very nice. We had long talks. But he never mentioned it. We got to Paris the next day at the Talleyrand and he said, come on down to my office and talk to me. He said, how would you like to be Deputy Chief of a Mission? I looked at him and I said, I thought I was. I figured you just wanted to see if I was tolerable or not. He looked at me and laughed and said, that's right. He was going to get his own opinion first. Then he said, well I really don't need a Deputy. In terms of dividing the work, he didn't. It was quite true. But he said, I would like to have somebody I could talk to when I have to make decisions, to chew it around together.

Ambassador Anderson supported Stevenson in the 1956 election. You may remember, he didn't win, much to my disappointment and a great many people there. To the disappointment of a great many Danes too who had some ideas on the subject. I became Charge because she said she wasn't going to stay and when she had campaigned against the President she wasn't going to stay. So, she went home and I became Charge which turned out to last for a little more than a year, to my surprise. I was in charge of the US Mission while I was Deputy to Mr. Marshall so we teased a lot and say decide which floor we meet on, your floor or my floor. He resigned too, and then I was made Mission Director. I had a lot of different jobs in my three years, all moving toward more responsibility and I enjoyed it very much. I liked it and it was a great place to be. Al Shantz

said it was the worst place to come as your first post because you'll never find anything better. In a way that was true, but it was a great experience, I think, because one it was the times but also was the fact that it was small and in a small Mission you got a chance to see it all. Whereas you get in a really large Mission like Paris (I was offered to go to Paris--not as Economic Counselor--but to go to Paris) and you're going to be pigeon-holed just like you are in Washington. To get a feel for how the thing works it was ideal.

We got inspected one time by John Burns. When he got through with inspection, you have your little review. He allowed as how every Mission had a sort of different ambient and the thing that struck him about the Copenhagen Mission was that it seemed more like Washington to him than most--acted more like Washington. And, he said also (that was just observation, his next point was criticism) you know that this Mission has argued more instructions from Washington than any Mission in the world except one, which is somewhat larger. I said, so? He said, well you're supposed to carry out instructions not argue about them. I said, John, what you just said illustrates that while we're about the same age, and we've been working in this racket about the same length of time, you've been in the field most of the time and I've been in Washington most of the time. I've signed too many hundreds of those messages with Acheson is (or whoever was Secretary) name was to believe that whoever wrote them or sent them out was omniscient, or that he cleared it with everybody informed. Even if he cleared it with everybody, what the hell good is it to have a person out here if he can't tell you and won't tell you that what you're asking him to do is going to be counterproductive in terms of local environment? I said, I don't think it's a right. I think it's a duty to go back and say I think you're all wet. If you do, these are the things that are going to happen and they're bad. Now if the Department comes back and says we know that but we've got a different purpose or a higher purpose or overriding requirement and do it. Then I say yes sir, I do it. Unless it's a matter of principle, which I would resign about.

It was interesting to me and I thought about it a lot and I think that it's a mistake that happens frequently in the Foreign Service, not to argue about them. I've never been one that believes that all the top jobs should be reserved for Foreign Service Officers. I think Foreign Service Officers can be as good as anybody, maybe better if he's got the gumption to not be hide-bound by the book and precedent. Not afraid to argue. Of the really good Ambassadors, some of them I've admired like David Bruce. I think he was a terrific guy. It never bothered him to argue. It never bothered Ray Hare to argue. Ray Hare had a great technique. He was a specialist in the sending in a long message thing saying unless instructed to the contrary, I'm going to do this tomorrow. Knowing damn well they'd never be able to clear a negative message in time. Denmark was interesting.

Q: These years in Washington and these years in Denmark, they are now looked back upon as the golden age of American foreign policy. Was there a sense in Washington or in Denmark at the time of that, or participating in these great events and in a really constructive, positive American foreign policy?

BELL: Yeah. I think so. I don't know if it was looked at so much as historical, but it was sure exciting and it was very stimulating time. I tell people that talk to me now about going into the Foreign Service, I say, well my experience, I think, was fortuitous. It was unique in a fortuitous way. Now whether it will be anything like this in the future, God knows. Because what happened

was we had a total redefinition of what America's foreign policy was going to be, what our role was and what the State Department's role was. From the time I went with the State Department, you had less than a 1,000 people. You knew everybody. You worked from 9:00am to 4:30pm, maybe. Very different by the time the war ended. There are 10,000 people working in this. You've got several other agencies. You're into a whole new ball game. How are you going to respond? The Marshall Plan, NATO, when you thought about those you felt really privileged to be a part of it. Really privileged. I still think the European Cooperation Administration, in its first two years, was the best Government agency there ever was, ever could have been. They had motivation. They had a combination of idealistic and can-do people from business, from industry, from academia, from everywhere. The brightest people you ever saw coming together to do something creative and new and exciting and philanthropic, and self-rewarding and without any goddamn administrative control from Congress or the Budget Bureau for two years.

The countries had to provide counterpart, 5% of what you gave them in dollars they had to pay back in francs or whatnot. We used to kid about there being a barrel in the Talleyrand where you go and dip in if you wanted some francs, go get some. But, the thing was if you wanted to do something you could do it now. If you needed a building, you bought it. You didn't put it down on your budget for two years from now and fight 500 committees and a lot of crap and have to buy American. You just bought it. If you needed to go to Washington to talk about something, you got on a plane and went. If you wanted to phone, you phoned. You didn't worry about it. I mean, they had it made.

Gradually the binds of bureaucracy controls grew about it. It's as bad now as any other agency, maybe worse than some. They now keep trying to prove they aren't going to do wrong. You know you can't do that. You can't legislate good judgment and make it work. It was exciting. NATO was exciting. You believed the stuff and you didn't have all the doubts that time will eventually bring to you. In that Aviation Division I talked about, we said you know there were about 12 guys and we were all about the same age. It was a joke. We said if you don't have two kids you don't belong here. You're married, have two kids and you really think aviation is important. I went to work and I finally realized that the plane flies around the world instead of the world going around the airplane. A different perspective.

Q: What about the Europeans, and the Danes in particular, wasn't there a resentment connected with all this? About the United States coming in?

BELL: The Danes are a very sophisticated people, a very sophisticated people and, on the whole, they are very pro-American people. Are you familiar with the annual event at Rebild in Jutland? Never heard of it? Well, for God knows how many years, it must be 50-60-70, they have had an American-Danish association formed largely by families who had people who had immigrated to America and Americans who retained ties with Denmark. They formed this organization and they bought about 12 acres of land in Jutland near a town called Rebild. They gave it to the Government of Denmark as a national park on two conditions, one that that could maintain a museum there and the other that they could have an annual Fourth of July celebration there. So this museum is made up of logs of every State in the Union. It's in a kind of natural amphitheater where you walk down past flagpoles which have the flags of every American state, (the only place I've ever seen them), all 50 American states. Then, two giant flagpoles with the flags of

Denmark and America. Every year they have this big celebration. Now Rebild was a town of maybe 10,000-15,000 people. You'll get somewhere around 30,000-40,000 people for this thing. Almost all Danes, but all with some connection to America. Every other year the King comes. Somebody from the government comes every year and the American Ambassador, which just makes the Fourth of July great to be Denmark.

Everybody goes to Rebild. That's the big day, makes a speech. They start out around noontime with a lunch and then you start the speeches and singing. They raise both flags. They have color guards. Somebody will make a speech then they'll sing--somebody will make a speech--then they'll sing. Eventually in the evening they have a big dinner and fireworks. Well, you get 30,000-40,000 people singing the Star-Spangled Banner, it'll get to you. There is a strong feeling of connection.

That doesn't mean they aren't critical. They are among the most critical people in the world. You can't talk to a Dane seriously about anything for more than 15 minutes without having him insert, at some point, "Denmark's a little country". They have a "little country" complex. This goes back basically, I think, to the war with Prussia about 1863 when Denmark lost Schleswig-Holstein. The Germans took away from them about 20-30 percent of their country at that time. Some Danes still covet getting it back, but most don't. Anyway, Denmark then came to the conclusion that there was no way in which it could compete with the really big powers anymore, (it had been at one time a very big force back in history) and that their future, therefore, depended on accommodation, policies of accommodation. Sort of like a raft on the sea, they accommodate themselves to the wind and the tide and survive. Don't buck them. It's been a tradition for nearly 100 years in the country. Well, you couple this with the fact that Denmark has one of the highest literacy rates in the world, they are the fathers of continuing adult education back in the Middle of the 19th Century. You can go anywhere in Denmark and have an intelligent discussion about almost anything with anybody. They are not dumb people and they think of themselves as very smart, very intelligent. It's inevitable that when you couple a belief in yourself as superior intellectually, with a conviction that you are powerless, it's very easy to be critical of those with power and tell them how they ought to be doing what they are not doing or how to do what they are doing.

Q: They put a restriction on nuclear weapons right from the very beginning didn't they?

BELL: I don't know when they came to that conclusion. They have never been comfortable with it. Niels Bohr, whom I got to know in Denmark (a very great man), was deeply troubled by this whole business of nuclear weapons--what he had done, what he had contributed to it. He really felt appalled that now we could blow the world apart and he had some responsibility for it. But they basically like Americans. They just liked to tell you what you were doing wrong, but they don't want to take any responsibility themselves. They're not strong enough to do anything. You can have some damn good arguments with them. One reason why Mrs. Anderson was so attractive to Denmark. She was a great Ambassador in my opinion. A really great Ambassador for Denmark. Couldn't have been better. The first job she ever really had and she hadn't looked for it, but she took it seriously. The first thing she did before she went there was learn to speak Danish. She was the first Ambassador from anywhere that ever bothered. What for? They speak English, French, German. What do you want to speak ...? But she did. Then she had her first

public speech in Denmark which was to an association of newspaper editors. Denmark has something like 10 times as many papers as England, with a fraction of the population. They all read and they keep up. A big change in the Danish legislature in a vote is three or four seats. I mean, these people are right on top of what's going on in their society. The newspaper editors are the most critical voice in any group, I think. She made a major speech to them in which she dealt with what had been one of the main subjects of criticism of the United States in the Danish press for some years which was race relations. She talked about race relations and she did a bang-up job of it. She didn't deny anything, but she accentuated the positive and what changes were happening. It took all the wind out of their sails. That speech got wider circulation than any speech ever made in Denmark, by anybody. It was terrific and she became a sort of folk heroine to the Danes. She was really great.

No, the Danes were a little nervous about the whole thing. You could understand it when you can talk about the medium-term defense plan and the longer-range plan under the most favorable circumstance of NATO military planning, you might hold Denmark three days. They're 15 minutes from Russian airfields, 15 minutes. That was in 1952. Now you don't even have to fly, just bomb a few. So, they were very exposed and the whole thing that they had to be convinced of, or try to be convinced of, was that the object was deterrence and it had to work. If it came to war, they were gone anyhow. Very easy if you figure that way to say why should we break our backs to spend our resources. There is always going to be a difference in their view of how much they should do and spend with our view of how much they should do and spend. Particularly, because they have such large social programs. Really very effective social programs. I think it's a great little country and it was very pleasant living there and working there. The climate is not much, but otherwise it's fine.

HARVEY F. NELSON, JR.
Consular/Political Officer
Copenhagen (1952-1956)

Ambassador Nelson was born and raised in California. He was educated at Occidental College, The University of Stockholm, Sweden and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. After serving in the US Navy and teaching at Bowdoin College, Ambassador Nelson joined the Foreign Service and served in Washington and abroad, primarily as a political officer dealing in Scandinavian and African affairs. In 1985 he was appointed Ambassador to Swaziland.

NELSON: So a very recently married couple with no children was sent to Denmark. Not bad! We were there from 1952 to 1956.

Q: *What was the situation in Denmark at the time?*

NELSON: This was during the early days of NATO and there was a lot of debate on whether Denmark should join. The tensions with the Soviets were running very high. There was a lot of uncertainty about American influence - a subject that was being discussed in many countries. I

still have a newspaper cartoon which showed the changing of the guard at the royal palace; only the troops were American GIs shown as a sloppy, crummy looking bunch of guys. It was very funny. It was almost on the mark! It showed a friendly and humorous concern that the Danes had.

During my tour, the first defection of a Soviet MIG took place. He flew to Bornholm. It was a big story.

Q: What was your assignment?

NELSON: I started as a consular officer. After a year, I joined the political section. Our ambassador was Eugenie Anderson, an outstanding person from Red Wing, Minnesota.

Q: Did you mention your connection with Senator Norris?

NELSON: I wouldn't have dared to do so. That is something I learned from my mother; we were not to use the Senator's name, and I think she was absolutely right. The Senator would have been quite displeased.

Anderson was an outstanding ambassador and she had a superb DCM, Jack Bell, who became a sort of a mentor and a great friend. As I said, I spent one year as a vice consul.

Q: What do you remember about your consular work?

NELSON: We had the usual number of Americans in jail. We had a lot of seamen who got into trouble. One day, one of these seamen came in to see me. I had seen him before when he was in some sort of trouble. He told me that his ship had left, and he was stranded in Denmark. So we had to repatriate him.

I had a very unfortunate case of an American woman whose Danish husband had died, leaving her penniless. She wanted to return to the U.S. So I arranged free passage on a freighter which could be done on those days with the captain's permission. We had no resources at the time for repatriation. I think it was some sort of miracle whenever we were able to find free passage. We did have some money to provide an allowance to pay for food and sundries. But I didn't realize that she was an alcoholic. So she showed up at the ship, drunk and in bad condition. The captain refused to let her board. But the next day, I gave the captain the money and he allowed the woman to board. That took some persuasion, but I convinced him that as long she didn't have any money, she couldn't get any alcohol. As far as I know she was delivered to the U.S. This was my first lesson in naiveté when working with people who you are trying to help, but who do not help themselves.

Then there was a young man who came through during Christmas time. We had been taught in the indoctrination course never to use your money to help destitute Americans. This man was headed for Norway for reasons that I don't remember now. He asked me for \$10 for bus fare; I knew I couldn't get government assistance for him, and I did have the money in my pocket. So I loaned him the money and much to my surprise, a few weeks later I got the money back.

Q: Did you have a visa fraud problem?

NELSON: I was not conscious of any efforts to obtain visas fraudulently. I had very little to do with visa issuances in any case. I was working on passports and protection of Americans. So if there were major problems, I was not aware of them. Redman Duggan, our consul, was an exceedingly cautious man. I don't remember him ever mentioning any problems.

Q: Did you get involved in the annual Fourth of July celebration?

NELSON: Certainly; it was a major event in Copenhagen. We had a very nice ambassadorial residence. I don't think at the time the list of invitees was quite as large as it has become in more recent years.

Q: Did you make any close Danish friends?

NELSON: We did establish some very good relations. Next week, my wife and I are going to Europe. First we are going to England to visit some friends; then she is going to Amsterdam for a business conference; we will then meet in Copenhagen to see some old Danish friends. I should mention that this is my second wife who was not with me during my Copenhagen tour, but she has met these Danes and has also become friends with them. I have a Danish God-daughter and have in effect adopted her daughter as our Danish God-grand-daughter. We have a place there, and these people have become sort of family. These friendships all stemmed from my first tour in Copenhagen. We adopted our oldest child in Copenhagen. He was a Swedish national. So when we adopted him, he was given a diplomatic visa in his Swedish passport - as a son of an American diplomat. Among our close Danish friends is an attorney who arranged the adoption and the convoluted passport document.

I hadn't realized that making friends with the Danes was any kind of problem. I have heard that although they are very friendly, it is sometimes difficult to break into their inner circles. I never found that. Of course, we were there when all of Europe was still trying to recover from a horrible war. It may well have been that everyone was more open to Americans particularly.

Q: That raised the question of how the Danes viewed the Germans in the early 1950s.

NELSON: Not at all friendly. They were edgy about their neighbors although they recognized that Germany was pretty much under the control of the Allies. The control was tight enough to limit our access to and through Germany only through some specific routes or limited transportation ways - e.g. closed trains.

The Danes managed to deal with the Germans during the war and delighted in fooling the Germans sufficiently to become an escape route for Jews fleeing Germany and other parts of Europe. The lawyer I mentioned was one of the leaders of this "underground" escape route. He unfortunately was shot while trying to help the Jews and is today crippled by the wounds. He is barely able to walk. Not surprisingly, even today he bears a resentment against the Germans.

Q: The Soviets were quite close to Denmark at the time. Was there concern that they might make a move?

NELSON: Certainly. They were stationed right across the water in Lübeck in Germany. And the island of Bornholm was very close to Soviet occupied territory. So the Danes did worry. My wife and I were first alerted to this when upon our arrival, we were housed in the Koden Hotel which was right on the waterfront. The morning after our arrival, we noticed large numbers of troop on the docks. People were scurrying around with guns. We wondered whether some action was under way. Fortunately, we discovered it was just an exercise. It was enough to worry us and to raise some questions in our minds.

Q: You were in Copenhagen in 1953, when the Berlin riots broke out. I was in Darmstadt at the time in the military and we were ordered not to leave our barracks. It was a very tense moment.

NELSON: We didn't really understand what was going on and whether anyone could keep events from getting out of control. We had enough of these kinds of incidents by that time so that when a new one popped out, people were not overly alarmed.

Q: How large was the political section?

NELSON: It was a small embassy. I think there must have been just a couple of political officers in it. In fact, I think that Jack Bell, the DCM, and I covered the political landscape. We spent our time talking to the political leadership. There were several parties in the parliament, and I spent most of my time talking to the fringe groups. The contacts with the major parties were reserved for the ambassador and the DCM.

One of my contacts was with the representative of the "Single Tax" party; he was the sole member of parliament from that group. He tried to explain "single" tax to me several times, but I can't say that it made much of a dent. It was an interesting time in Denmark; I got to meet most of the Danish political leadership. How useful any of this was one never knows.

Q: Did the Danes have a socialist society at the time as the Swedes had?

NELSON: I don't think so, My impression was that it was a different society from Sweden having observed that one a few years earlier when I was a student. One of my classmates whom I didn't know very well was Olaf Palme, who became prime minister in 1969. Erlander was the prime minister when I was there and for many years thereafter - until 1969. They espoused a socialist philosophy, but I have the impression that despite the rhetoric, today the country is far from being a socialist state. The Danes never went in that direction, even though the socialist party was very strong. But the leadership of the country was changed often enough to prevent any radical departures from the norm.

Q: What were American interests in Denmark at the time?

NELSON: I think we were principally interested in assuring that Denmark remain a solid and forceful member of NATO.

Q: Were there any major issues between us and Denmark?

NELSON: I don't think so. We didn't run into many negative attitudes toward the U.S. I am sure that a few Danes may have held them, but it was not a general attitude. As I said, they were still recovering from a very difficult period in their history, and we were providing major relief.

Q: Many communist adherents in Denmark?

NELSON: No. There were some intellectuals and students who spoke in favor of the Soviet Union, but it was a very small minority. We of course considered this fringe to be very unrealistic. Even today there are still a few supporters of Russia and one has to wonder why. There was a small peace movement led by some members of the cultural community. I remember once that a visa was issued to a Danish cello player who turned up on one of Senator McCarthy's lists. Our consul was thoroughly shaken, but he was never punished for issuing the visa.

Q: Were McCarthy's activities well known in Denmark?

NELSON: Oh, yes. It was a very bad time for the U.S. and particularly the Foreign Service. As I mentioned earlier, my wife and I had only committed ourselves to trying the Foreign Service. During the McCarthy era, we were very close to leaving it because we felt that he was an unchecked rogue who was doing serious harm to our interests and certainly was not representing the principles for which we thought the U.S. stood. We considered Secretary Dulles extremely cowardly, and my wife and I felt that we could not really work for this administration.

Q: Were your embassy colleagues expressing similar dismay?

NELSON: Absolutely. Jack Bell was replaced as DCM by Luke Battle, who was more or less a political appointee, although certainly not a newcomer to the Department. The story was that he was sent to Denmark to get him out of the Department because he was too liberal and therefore suspect for Senator McCarthy. He was sent to Denmark in order to protect him.

Q: Scott McLeod was McCarthy's eyes and ears in the Department.

NELSON: That's right. It was a bad time for the Department of State. People were treated badly. So we came close to resigning from the Foreign Service.

Q: By 1954, were you still on the fence about the Foreign Service?

NELSON: I think lethargy had set in by that time. I didn't have an alternative. Furthermore we had come to like the work and life-style; so I guess you can say that by that time we were hooked. You may remember that by this time, we had a Refugee Relief Act which had not been well implemented, at least as far as Congress was concerned. Because of Congressional pressures, the Department decided to open a number of new consular offices to handle the additional work-load. So we were suddenly ordered to go to Naples to join the Refugee Relief staff there. We were

given ten days to report. So we sold our car, packed up our belongings, etc. The night before we were supposed to leave we were told that our orders had been canceled and we were to stay in Denmark. So we had to start all over again.

Q: After the Naples debacle, what happened in 1955?

NELSON: We stayed in Denmark one more year.

THEODORE SELLIN
Political/Consular Officer
Copenhagen (1952-1956)

Theodore Sellin was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and attended the University of Pennsylvania. He entered the Foreign Service in 1952. His posts include Denmark, Washington, DC, Finland, Norway, the Naval War College, OES, and Sweden. Sellin was interviewed by Tom Dunnigan in 2003.

Q: Well, at the end of your A100 course, you received your assignment to Copenhagen.

SELLIN: Correct.

Q: Were you pleased with that?

SELLIN: Yes, and no, strange to say... I had put Stockholm as my first choice on the wish list that we all had, and the department was really very accommodating in sending me to Copenhagen. I'd been to Copenhagen a couple of times during my two years in Sweden. It was all right, but I really thought, by that time I spoke very good Swedish, and could not comprehend how the State Department couldn't take a young officer who spoke that language and send them there. I was a bit naive, but as it turned out, of course, I evolved and the stationing in Denmark turned out to be a really very fine one, and I was delighted. I should add here, as a postscript, that in fact throughout my 30 years I always put Stockholm somewhere on my wish list, and although I have served in four of the Scandinavian or Nordic nations, I never got Stockholm.

Q: You got Sweden, but not Stockholm.

SELLIN: I eventually got Göteborg, difficult to pronounce in English, but with a venerable international transliteration of Gothenburg. But I never got Stockholm.

Q: What was the atmosphere in Denmark when you arrived?

SELLIN: It was interesting because two things had happened that were very unpopular, well three things, including eventually the ramifications of McCarthyism, among other things that famous Shine and Cohn investigation of the USIS library. I remember...

Q: I had to greet them both in London.

SELLIN: Yes, well they came to Copenhagen as well. First of all, I would say that on arrival in Denmark I was quite astonished when I found that the Danes could not comprehend how the Americans had elected Dwight D. Eisenhower as President. They admired him a great deal. They'd given him the Order of the Dannebrog; he has an escutcheon in Frederiksborg Castle, in the church there along with that of Marshal Montgomery. But they couldn't understand how an intellectual like Adlai Stevenson, so far superior brain wise, how the electorate wouldn't have elected him. And the other thing was the execution of convicted Soviet atomic spies, the Rosenbergs. That occurred as I recall sometime in the first six months or year I was there, and there was a lot of demonstration against that. But, basically, I found the Danes themselves to be very forthcoming. During my consular work there in the first year, they went along with all of the odious visa procedures that the McCarran Act had just put into effect.

Q: You were a consular officer there.

SELLIN: In the first year. I was there for three and a half years for a variety of reasons and I spent the majority of my time during the latter part in the political section, and stayed in the political cone ever since. But I came to Copenhagen with the McCarran Act under my arm, and it had been in effect since December 25, 1952, and I started issuing visas in January 3, 1953.
[laughter]

Q: [laughter]

SELLIN: So there was no...

Q: With the Act right beside you...

SELLIN: Right. There were no regs, no instructions, nothing to help us. It was kind of interesting trying to figure out how to apply the Act properly. Of course, there were Danish Nazi sympathizers who were trying to get to the States because they were not welcome in Denmark and things like that. But, basically, the other thing was the oath that visa applicants all had to take denying any connection with Communism. I swore that oath, I took that oath from these Danes who were of all ranks and station in life; they all had to come in and get fingerprinted and raise their hand and swear that they weren't going to overthrow the US government. That was introduced in the McCarran Act as a requirement, it did not exist under the former acts, I don't think, but it certainly was a demeaning experience in my opinion for these people to have to go through.

Q: Fingerprinting for all Europeans is a very distasteful process. They don't like it.

SELLIN: I know, I understand that. I sympathize. Oh, the other interesting thing on the consular side was the first well-known transvestite who was operated on in Copenhagen.

Q: Jorgensen or something like that?

SELLIN: Chris later Christine Jorgensen. And that happened just before I got there, but there were some questions that came up about his passports and things like that that needed some attention. Actually, as vice consul I didn't deal with that directly. This was dealt with by a consul himself.

Q: [laughter] Yes.

SELLIN: It was Red Duggan, incidentally. But that did lead to another case, a similar one that occurred on my watch, so that was one of the more unusual aspects of the consular work there.

Q: Annoying, but...

SELLIN: No, but just unusual.

Q: Unusual. What was the Communist influence in Denmark in those days?

SELLIN: I don't recall it being particularly large. The party was, I can't now remember exactly the percentage in the parliament. They had parliamentary representation, and they were making some trouble in the unions and other certain areas of that kind, but I don't recall them as being particularly threatening to the political system. As you know from your years in Denmark, it's virtually impossible to get a majority government in Denmark, so there were all kinds of coalitions, but the Communists, to my recollection, at least while I was there, never got a seat in government. So they were pretty much isolated politically.

Q: Did they try to penetrate the Social Democrats like they do in so many places?

SELLIN: I guess so. As you may remember, in 1956, the invasion of Hungary by the Soviets really tore the Communist party apart. Aksel Larsen himself, who was the leader of the Communist Party, quit and formed his own left Socialist group. No, I think the Danes weren't terribly troubled by the Communist influence at that time.

Q: And what about the Soviet presence and influence?

SELLIN: Well, they had a large embassy there. I'm sure they were hard at work. The embassy was just across the graveyard from where our new embassy was built while I was there. It's hard to say. I don't really, again, recall much in the way of a Soviet effort. There were no large demonstrations against them that I can recall, except the one at the time of the Hungarian invasion, and that one came actually toward the end of my tour there. And that turned a lot of people against the Russians and their home-grown Communists as well. The Communists, incidentally, while we are on the subject of the consular issue - one of the more famous Danes who was a Communist during the war, in the underground, was a man named Mogens Fog. He was a medical doctor and was one of the underground heroes. He also was refused visas to the United States because he was a Communist. At one point, he came in to apply for one while I was there, and I had to turn him down. But it turned out that he earlier had visited the States, and we fished up an earlier application and he'd been issued a visa on instructions from a previous ambassador. I think we eventually got a waiver for him. Because by then he was no longer a

member of the Party, Parenthetically, he went on eventually to become what the Nordics entitle the "Rector Magnificus" of the Copenhagen University.

Q: I thought so, yes.

SELLIN: He was very prominent in academia.

Q: That's an embarrassing situation, trying to turn someone down who's already had a visa.

SELLIN: Yes. But in terms of the politics, no. The Communists were marginalized. We were talking about the Russians. We can only assume that they were doing whatever they do in circumstances like this. They certainly didn't have the kind of influence that they had in Finland, for example, where they played a fairly important role but not dominant role in domestic or international affairs.

Q: I'm sure that the Danes by this time in the mid-'50s had recognized the Red Chinese, hadn't they?

SELLIN: Yes, they had. In fact, I remember at one point, the DCM, a fellow by the name of Fritz Jandry, who was Charge at the time, was invited out to Rebild, that would be the Danish-American Fourth of July celebration, at Aarhus, Jutland.

Q: Yes.

SELLIN: And the organizers out there had put him right next to the Chinese ambassador. I asked him later how he had dealt with that, and he said, "Well, I simply ignored him." [laughter] You sit there for hours you know, looking the other way. So, that's true, they had recognized them. Also, they had a hospital ship off South Korea during the Korean War period. That stayed on a while and it came back, as I recall, while I was in Copenhagen. It came back for... well, it was given back to the shipping company that had created it, outfitted it. So that was their contribution, basically.

Q: What was your main job in the political sector, if you can characterize any major ops.

SELLIN: Well, I was junior officer, by this time I spoke and read Danish. I certainly read it without any hindrance. I fractured my Swedish into a sort of passable Danish. My chief at the time was Luke Battle, Dean Acheson's former personal assistant and assigned to Copenhagen as an Attaché of Embassy to get him out of harm's way in DC. A marvelous boss who handled all of the important contacts. So, basically I was supposed to read the newspapers and report on political gatherings, attend Parliament and report, and such like. Also had some low-level contacts in the Foreign Ministry, and with the Greenland department. We had a lot to do with the Danes on issues involving Thule Air Force Base. They were building...

Q: I wanted to ask you about Greenland, yes...

SELLIN: I never got there, but while I was in Copenhagen, Greenland did occupy a fair amount of our time, because we were constantly dealing with the problem of radio frequencies, of all things. We had to send numerous diplomatic notes. Every time they were changing a frequency up in Greenland, the U.S. Military, we had to get approval. There was a lot of that kind of work that the political section was doing at that time. And we were also building the BMEWS, the large over the horizon radar network. Since Danish contractors were involved there, we got a little bit involved in that as well.

Q: But I arrived in Denmark... I remember the first problem we had was fisheries off Greenland, because some of our fisherman were getting into waters that the Danes didn't want them in. We had an awful problem for a while, but we settled it finally.

SELLIN: I wasn't involved in fisheries at that time. The other event up in the outlying areas that occupied my last weeks in Copenhagen, a month, maybe, was the Klaksvig disturbance... what term was it... it wasn't an uprising... but the Faeroe Islands...

Q: I was going to ask you about the Faeroes, again...

SELLIN: Again, I never got there, but it was a very interesting revolt of the fisherman, basically, but not against other fisheries so much as against the local authorities. I had to write some reports on that. But it wasn't resolved until after I left. But it was an unusual experience for the stolid Danes.

Q: Oh, yes!

SELLIN: They had a riot on their hands in one of their possessions.

Q: Well, some people were coming along in your time who became quite well known later, like Jens Otto Krag and others.

SELLIN: Yes. I'd met him but I didn't know him. We didn't have any serious contact with him. You would see his wife in the movies. His wife was a movie star, and a very popular one in those days. So he came on the scene essentially after I had left. In fact, all of the names of the people who are current are people that I had no knowledge of at the time. There were a few young Foreign Service officers who went on to very high posts in the Danish Foreign Ministry or abroad. Many of those had served here in Washington after leaving the junior jobs in the Foreign Ministry and I got to know some of them here when I was stationed here. Later Ambassador to the U.S., Peder Dyvig, is one who was here in the '70s; also Benny Mogensen, who later was Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry. So those are the ones that I had some contact with.

Q: What about the Danish military in those years? They'd joined NATO. They'd never been, in recent times, a militaristic country. Did they put up their share or did we have to keep working on that?

SELLIN: That was a constant problem as I recall, at that time, and probably still today. They were never particularly anxious to... well they claimed they couldn't afford to pay the kind of

defense costs that we were trying to get NATO countries to make, to carry their fair share of the burden. And the big issue when I was there was the length of the conscription tour of duty. We were pushing for 24 months at the time, which was the American conscription period. And the Danes didn't do it; they just never had a 24-month conscription while I was there. In fact, they were going to cut it from 18 months to 12, and there was a lot of push and pull on that with us. So in that sense, the Danes fell short of what we thought would be the proper burden sharing, in a sense, both in terms of conscript time and funds. There was also, I discovered later... I wasn't privy to it at the time...but I discovered later that there was a lot going on about a NATO cooperation issue that both Norway and Denmark were involved in. That was our effort to get air bases in Denmark proper (and Norway) to station U.S. fighter aircraft and permit bombers returning from a nuclear attack on Russia, if they ever could return, for sanctuary, or not sanctuary so much as a place to land where they could then refuel and fly on. And later, the Danes, despite a lot of bargaining that went on, the Danes never agreed. Nor did the Norwegians. Basically, the Danes were getting the important NATO umbrella protection on the cheap. But I think they were concerned about Russian reaction. Certainly the Norwegians were. The Danes were right there on the East German border, and the Russians had briefly occupied the island of Bornholm after the war. So there was always that little concern that part, maybe all, of their territory would again be at risk.

Q: And the Russian ambassador was probably reminding them of those things too. [laughter]

SELLIN: [laughter] yes.

LUCIUS D. BATTLE
Political Officer
Copenhagen (1953-1955)

Ambassador Lucius Battle was born in Georgia in 1918. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Denmark, France, and Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Egypt. This interview was conducted by Dayton Mak.

Q: We have now finished your assignment in the Secretary Acheson's office. Then you went to Denmark.

BATTLE: I went there as first secretary in the Political Section. I felt that I just couldn't stay around the Department with John Foster Dulles as Secretary. I could have used my acquaintance with Dulles if I had wanted to get me another assignment, but I didn't want to do that. When his appointment was announced, I knew it was time for me to leave the Department or work out some other assignment. I cast around; I went to see Carl Humelsine, who was then in charge of administration in the Department. There was no designee for the political job in Copenhagen to replace Charlie O'Donnell who was leaving. That job sounded about right for me.

Denmark was lovely. It was a marvelous country, but being first secretary of an Embassy of the size of Copenhagen was not rich enough for my blood. I didn't care about the rank, but I cared

about the substance. There wasn't much to write about. I had a pleasant couple of years during which I felt I was totally out of the swim of things. We had a marvelous time; it was not an unhappy tour, but I also didn't feel particularly productive. During one of the last dinners we had arranged for Dean Acheson before his retirement, John Ferguson and I and some of his old time admirers and friends were sitting around discussing the "good old days". Acheson said: "The best thing for all of you to do with the Republicans coming in, is have a fallow period. Be like the plants. When something happens, someone will tell you. Don't read *The New York Times* from cover to cover every day. Have a fallow period and get rested for the next round". That was a marvelous bit of advice which I kept remembering when I was in Denmark.

DANIEL ZACHARY
Economic Officer
Copenhagen (1955-1957)

Dan Z. Zachary was born in Illinois in 1923. In the Foreign Service, he was posted to Germany, Denmark, Greece, Ethiopia, Zaire and France. He also served in Washington. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

Q: In 1955, you went to Copenhagen, were you stayed until 1957. What were your duties there?

ZACHARY: I was an economic officer and also did some commercial work. At that point we were trying to get the Danes interested in the American market. European nations, such as Denmark, were still recovering from the dislocation of the war. I gave speeches around the country telling the Danes how to enter the American market. I did general economic reporting. A large part of my job was on East-West trade (COCOM work). The Danes were somewhat reluctant participants in COCOM. They took a more liberal view of what should be provided the Russians than we did. That part of the work was quite interesting.

Q: How did you as a junior officer relate to the Danes on the COCOM issues?

ZACHARY: The decisions on those issues were made in COCOM in Paris. Our job was to provide information on what was going on, keep in contact with the Trade and Foreign Office people and make demarches. My boss was usually the one to go to the Danish Government offices to make the demarches. He would take me along and I would do write the memoranda on those meetings. The Americans would explain our positions and, at that time, we were usually successful. The Danes were not happy, but generally went along with our decisions which were based on very strict interpretations of COCOM regulations. The Danes wanted to build some dry cargo boats but we thought that this would be unwise because it would allow Soviet shipyards to build more combatant vessels. It would also provide the Soviets with a product superior to what they could build themselves. Then there were questions on illegal diversions on Danish ships or illegal transshipments through Copenhagen.

Q: Did you have a network of informants to let you know about these diversions?

ZACHARY: No informants. CIA wasn't much help. They claimed to have more urgent priorities than diversion cases. We did have our normal contacts in the shipping industry, in commerce and in the Foreign and Commerce Ministries. We would approach them for information. We did obtain useful information through our normal contacts and the press.

DOUGLAS G. HARTLEY
Consular Officer/Commercial Officer
Copenhagen (1957-1958)

Douglas G. Hartley was born in England to American parents and was educated at Eton and Harvard University. After entering the Foreign Service in 1956, his assignments abroad have included Copenhagen, Salzburg, Belgrade, Milan, Athens, Rome, London and Brazil. Mr. Hartley was interviewed in 1998 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Great duty.

HARTLEY: Having a pregnant wife may have had something to do with it, too. By the time we were ready to leave, which was in March of '57, she was seven months pregnant. So we went to Copenhagen. I remember that as a farewell present my parents gave us tickets to *My Fair Lady* in New York. We went there the night before we left for Copenhagen. I remember the plane we took over, I think a DC-7. It was the only time I was ever in a berth. It was still those days when we went first class and we had sleeping berths. We stayed at the Codan hotel by the harbor. The first impression was bleakness and darkness. Meanwhile, my wife waddled dutifully to make her calls as we were all taught to do, on all senior officers' wives (and they were all senior to us!). Being very pregnant and having to use the streetcars through ice and snow was hardly easy on her, but she persevered and in fact met some good friends as a result. One such was Tim and Ann Titus, he of the CIA. Through Tim we quickly got in with a cadre of Danes whose chief pursuit seemed to be of parties.

Q: You were there in Copenhagen from '57 to?

HARTLEY: March '57 to October '58. My first child, Virginia, was born in Copenhagen.

Denmark, you'd have to define as a cushy post. Exactly what it was. The weather was probably the worst part of Denmark. I remember the winters seemed to drag on and on. But when Virginia, my daughter, was born it was May 5th, 1957, which was also the anniversary of the end of the Second World War. In those days women stayed in the hospital for 10 days. It was still early spring and when she came out it was full spring. It was a wonderful time of the year. Looking back on it, we had a lot of good times in Denmark. It was a fun post. It was not by any means full of weighty political problems. For me--I was a vice consul-- it was a learning experience. I had to learn what it was like to be an American Foreign Service officer overseas. It is something that is, in itself, a challenge. The job is a challenge insofar as I had to learn about visas, probably one of the easier functions of the consular service. But I hate to admit this, but I actually skipped

most of the consular training classes held in DC prior to departure. So I was up the creek, but fortunately I had a great old guy called Hugh Teller as my boss. He was a long-time consular officer who had been in Germany at the outset of World War II when we joined in 1941. He was a very good mentor for me.- and we had a highly skilled staff of locals. Did I need them! After a year, the post rotated me into the Commercial Section so I was able to get around quite a bit into the countryside. Livingston (Tony) Satterthwaite came in as DCM [deputy chief of mission] and he kind of took me under his wing. He perished in a helicopter crash in Greenland about two years later. I was Ambassador Val Peterson's escort for various trips through Denmark. That broadened my experiences, too. I spent the last six months in a ludicrously overstaffed economic section churning out reports which were almost all based on newspaper translations with what I hoped was a pithy comment at the end. I guess it was good for my writing skills if they served no other purpose. We met a lot of people of course, socially, and these people were also useful from the job point of view. Really, from the point of view of professional interests, I would have said had I been at a more senior level in the embassy, I would have been marginal.

Q: What was your impression of the ambassador, was it Val Peterson, while you were there?

HARTLEY: Yes, Val Peterson had been named ambassador. He was an Eisenhower political appointee, a Republican ex-governor of Nebraska. He was of Swedish ancestry. He spoke a little bit of Swedish, but I guess he had been able to convince them that he spoke the language. So he got in. He was a sort of big, blustery, loud guy. He liked to play tennis. I used to play tennis with or against him from time to time. His wife seemed to be completely out of it as far as I could see. She seemed to be basically a very simple woman. He had quite an interest in the ladies, though I actually never heard of anything. But he was a somewhat bizarre person. He was not very popular with the Danes but then they had become used to our political appointees. He was a Swedish-American and Danes don't particularly like the Swedes. The post was staffed with what I now see as people with problems. They were probably sent to Copenhagen because it was a place where people couldn't get into serious trouble.

Q: I was in the Office of Personnel in the Department at one point and we tended to put our weaker officers in Copenhagen or London. These were places where, I mean, what can they do there? But over a period of time, the accumulation gets to be significant!

ERIC FLEISHER
Political Officer
Copenhagen (1959-1963)

Eric Fleisher was born in Washington D.C. and raised in Japan. He attended the University of Stockholm, George Washington University and the University of Lund and entered the Foreign Service in 1950. His career included postings in Germany, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. Mr. Fleischer was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on June 12, 2002.

Q: So your career in RRP was less than lengthy. Back to the Department and INR. You worked on Nordic affairs.

FLEISHER: Right. I was promised that I could do political work if I would take a job doing economic work as a starter. So, I said, "That's fine." I think I worked on Denmark on the economic side. But I realized that my college economics was insufficient. I took courses at GW at night to improve my knowledge of that field. Sure enough, within the year, I replaced Harvey Nelson on the political side for Denmark and Iceland. That's how my career in Nordic Affairs at the State Department started.

Q: did you get to travel to those countries?

FLEISHER: Yes. Then it was up to the mid-career course. This was before Class 4 was split into two and I went back down from Class 5 to Class 6, which is where I had started. After the mid-career course I was assigned to Copenhagen, first as vice consul replacing Frances Usenick and later John Goff as the junior political officer. I also had the job as consul on the Faroe Islands. I might mention how I got this assignment. Recently at Foreign Service Day, I was very pleased to see that finally Tony Satterthwaite was recognized. I was to have gone with Tony on that flight and would have been the embassy officer for Greenland. At the last moment, two colonels came up from Germany and I was the junior officer who was bounced from the flight. They went up to Greenland and were all killed in a helicopter accident.

Q: So you should have been on that flight.

FLEISHER: Yes. The ambassador was Val Peterson. He said, "Eric, you are not destined to go to Greenland so I am assigning you to the Faroe Islands job." That's how I became consul in the Faeroes.

Q: Who was your chief in Copenhagen?

FLEISHER: First it was Ward Allen. Then it was Vince Wilbur..

Q: How many were in the Political Section?

FLEISHER: We were three. Of course, we had Pol 2, which included other officers. My section consisted of the chief, me, and the geographic attaché. Later that was changed and reduced to two, but by that time I had left.

Q: and you had a Labor attaché, too?

FLEISHER: We had a Labor attaché, but in Copenhagen he was in the Economic Section. In Finland the Labor Attaché was in the Political Section.

Q: It's interesting - when I came to Copenhagen 10 years later, he was tied to the Political Section. Did you have any special problems?

FLEISHER: No, no special problems. It was just challenging.

Q: Relations with Denmark were on an even keel at that time.

FLEISHER: Yes. And I had complete access to everybody except the Prime Minister. My DCM after Tony Satterthwaite was "Pardy" Parsons. He said, "Eric, you've been in INR. I don't want you to sit behind books and newspapers. I want you to get down there and meet the people and get out," which I did. I got to know a good many politicians and members of Parliament who remained friends for the rest of my life. Among them were Per Haekkerup, who became Foreign Minister during my time in Copenhagen, Jens Otto Krag who became Prime Minister and Viggo Kampman who also later became Prime Minister. I remained on a first name basis with them long after my time in Denmark.

Q: Excellent. Let's talk a bit about your days in the Faeroes. That must have been an interesting experience.

FLEISHER: It was a fascinating experience. It was the only time I was chief of mission. It was great. I was the second American consul there. I succeeded John Haggeman. John was an economic officer and a very good student of the Faeroes. He really laid the groundwork for me. When I came in there, I was able to just pick up where he had left off.

Q: How long a time did you stay there?

FLEISHER: I would go up with the ship, "Tjaldur." It would go back down to Copenhagen, come back up, and on the next trip, I'd go back down to Copenhagen. The main purpose of my job was in connection with the installations we were putting in there under NATO. My job was to see that these fellows, Western Electric people, who were very highly paid compared to the Faeroese, didn't get in trouble with the local girls and things like that and keep good relations with the local Prime Minister, who became a very good friend of mine, and maintain an even keel. We did have some consular problems. There were some Faeroese receiving Social Security checks. We did have an American, an anthropologist, who went mad and we had to medevac her out through Scotland. This involved quite a bit of doing. I finally got her out on a fishing boat. The captain, after some dickering and with the support of the Danish High Commissioner, agreed to take her to the Shetlands. From there on, it wasn't my problem; it became that of my colleagues in the consulate in Edinburgh, but for them there it was a rather routine matter..

Q: I was going to ask you if there were any resident Americans in the Faeroes.

FLEISHER: There were a few, just a handful. I met several of them. There were others that I didn't meet because they were spread out over 17 islands, many of them inaccessible during the time that I was there for my consular visits. However, I put a notice in several of the Faeroese newspapers before I went up there, giving dates and times that I would be available for consular services if they wished to see me.

Q: The climate is certainly not conducive to vacations.

FLEISHER: Right. You have to love birds, fish, and whales. But I did have the opportunity to take our Ambassador out there. We went up on the "Tjaldur" and visited several of the islands. An American destroyer paid a visit at that time, and we had a big to-do. We invited the public to visit the ship, which was most appreciated by the people who were mostly fishermen and sailors.

Q: How were we able to communicate from the Faeroes back to Copenhagen?

FLEISHER: It was difficult. I could communicate by telephone. If necessary, I could use the Danish High Commissioner's facilities, which he was kind enough to put at my disposal.

Q: How were you received by the locals? Were they friendly to you?

FLEISHER: Very.

Q: And the Danish officials also?

FLEISHER: Yes. But there again, I had to maintain a balance. The Faeroe Islands are not part of Denmark. They are constitutionally united with the Crown of Denmark but are semi-autonomous. They have their own legislature and administration. The chief Danish official is not a governor as in any Danish province but a high commissioner. All local laws are passed by the Faroese Parliament, the Lagting. But Denmark is responsible for foreign relations and defense. I was thus required to be accredited by the Danish Government and the Faeroese administration. I presented my consular credentials to the Faeroese prime minister.

Q: Were other countries represented there or not?

FLEISHER: Yes. The consular corps was very interesting. The West Germans were represented. The British had the largest and most important mission. The Russian were there, too. But most were honorary consuls, businesspeople.

Q: That is a unique experience, being consul to the Faeroes. Back in Denmark, Jens Otto Krag became prime minister. Did that bring many changes in our relationship?

FLEISHER: Not really. Krag followed pretty much the policy laid out by H. C. Hansson, the preceding prime minister. Actually, Krag was very good for me. I knew him from earlier student days when he had been lecturer in political science and economics at the University of Stockholm. In Copenhagen I renewed the contact before he became Prime Minister. He and his wife Helle Virkner, a popular Danish actress on the stage and in films, were good friends and they were in our house and we in theirs on social occasions. I maintained a friendly and academic relationship with Jens Otto until he died. He was an interesting person.

Q: He had just stepped down when I arrived shortly thereafter.

FLEISHER: He was not of the old social democratic labor school of H.C. Hanson and Hans Hedtoft. He was an academic and represented the growing element of the new Social Democrats.

Q: It was Per Haekkerup who was really running things when I was there.

FLEISHER: Per and his wife Grethe were among my best friends in Denmark. He was my mentor in learning about Social Democracy and the labor movement in Danish politics. This was, of course, before he became Foreign Minister and later Prime Minister. He gave me one of the greatest professional compliments I have ever received. When my wife and I had dinner alone with the Haekkerups just before I left Denmark he said, "Eric, you will never become a Social Democrat, but you understand us."

WILLIAM ROOT
Economic Officer
Copenhagen (1959-1963)

William Root was born and raised in Massachusetts. He was educated at Colorado College and Columbia University and served in the US Navy during World War II. Throughout his career he has held several positions within the State Department. His career also took him to Germany, Vietnam, and Denmark. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2002.

ROOT: Well I had an open mind. It is an interesting question because in '59 I was assigned to Copenhagen as economics officer. The buildup to that was fascinating. Art Stevens, who was the executive director, was an adventuresome type. He loved to go to exotic places and do imaginative things. Being executive director, he was forever being importuned to by persons wanting a particular position. He told his staff of one of his reactions. He had just been pressured by someone who wanted to go to Copenhagen. He said, he couldn't imagine why anyone would want to go to Copenhagen. It would be like swimming in whipped cream. In '59 the personnel office had me tentatively assigned to about 15 places. For one reason or another they all fell apart. It was fascinating because I was doing research on all these 15 places, living vicariously all over the world. Finally they called me up and said, "We think now we really have an assignment for you. It is in Copenhagen." Just having heard the whipped cream story I had the following conversation with my personnel officer. "Let's get this straight. You have asked me if I want to go to Copenhagen, right?" "That's right." "I didn't ask you if I could go to Copenhagen did I?" "No, you didn't." "In that case I would be delighted." As for the economic assignment, I think this was part of the department's policy to provide officers with diversification in their experience. It was a little amusing because economics 101 at the Columbia School of International Affairs was the only course I had to take twice. Anyhow, such an assignment to a small embassy like Copenhagen was ideal because the economic section was so small that even a junior economic officer gets into everything. I should tell you what happened when I arrived. The first thing one does on arrival at a post is to pay one's respects to the ambassador. Val Peterson, a political appointee, ex-governor of Nebraska, ex-civil defense chief, was ambassador in Copenhagen then. He greeted me with, "So you are the new economics officer." "That is correct." "Well what is economics anyway?" I wasn't quite prepared for this, but I decided it was a serious question and it needed a serious answer. I took a few moments to collect my thoughts. Before I could say anything it turned out it was really a rhetorical question. He said, "I'll tell you.

Everything is economics." There was a pregnant pause. "Until it becomes important, and then it is politics." I interpreted this to be his way of telling me not to be surprised if the political section takes over something you have been working on because it has become a hot potato. Sure enough that happened, but there were so many fascinating issues that they couldn't handle everything anyway. For that reason, among many others, it was a wonderful place to be.

Q: You were there from...

ROOT: '59 to '63.

Q: '59 to '63. What was the political-economic situation in Denmark when you got there in '59?

ROOT: Well you ask a Dane and invariably sooner or later they will say "You must remember we are such a small country." Of course they are, but they are more important than this denigration would suggest, because they do have a vote in various international fora. From the perspective of an economic officer we got involved in such things as the chicken war. We wanted to sell chickens, and they wanted to raise their own chickens.

Q: These were the frozen chickens.

ROOT: That sort of thing. This wasn't entirely an easy argument for us to make because the American grain exporters loved exporting American grain to the Danish chicken growers, but the American chicken exporters wanted to export the chickens instead of the grain, and so it goes.

Q: Well the chicken war was the major opening gun of the conflict which continues today between the agricultural sectors of the United States and Europe. Did you find how responsive were the Danes to our pleas on the chicken wars?

ROOT: Not particularly. But as I say, since the U.S. grain exporters were delighted, we perhaps didn't push it with as much vigor as we might have.

Q: Did you get involved with the Danes on export controls on things going to the Soviet Union?

ROOT: Yes. Indeed sometimes we were asked to make end use checks to see if something on the strategic list that had been sent to a Danish importer from the States was being used where it was supposed to be used. This got very dicey because the local authorities didn't particularly like American officials delving into private enterprise in Denmark. So we attempted to work in tandem with the local authorities. That was the kind of issue we ran into.

Q: Did you get involved as an economic officer; did this include trade promotion too?

ROOT: Oh, yes. We were encouraged to give that priority. We had a commercial section and a commercial officer. I wasn't the commercial officer, but worked along with him. This is before Commerce had its own foreign commercial service, we had the same people doing that work.

Q: You notice dinner products were a big export from Denmark weren't they? Did they go mainly to Britain or did they go to the United States?

ROOT: Well a lot of it was going to the United States in the form of food products for U.S. forces in Germany. As a matter of fact, the State Department American personnel in Denmark were only about 10 or 15% of the total official U.S. government personnel in Denmark. There were all kinds of hangers-on including the veterinarian detachment from the army who was making sure that the Danish products passed inspections before they went to Germany. We had a coast guard detachment. We had a little of everything.

Q: Did you get any feel for relations between the Danes and the Germans at this point?

ROOT: Oh, yes. We did quite a bit of traveling within Denmark. One of the fascinating things about language was the closer you got to the German border, the more Danish sounded like German. The closer you got to the Swedish border, it sounded like Swedish. The closer you got to England, it sounded like English. Of course it wasn't, but there were these accents that you saw. Also the Danes, of course, knew how close their language was to German, but they didn't like to be reminded of it. If an American would refer to the capital city of Denmark as Copenhagen, they would say oh now it is Copenhagen (long a). Of course they don't say either. They say Koebenhavn they swallow it. Copenhagen is very close to the German Kopenhagen; whereas the English usually give it the long a for Copenhagen. These are the things that you learned that were sensitivities- you had better believe it - about the not so long ago German occupation.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Danish officials?

ROOT: They were delightful. In fact it is awfully hard to find anything pejorative or negative to say about an experience in a lovely place like Denmark. You could complain about the weather, but the people were really friendly. They would often remind you how small the country was. In other words don't expect us to pull your chestnuts out of the fire. Perhaps that is a way of saying don't expect us to increase our share of the burden, which was one of the favorite topics in those days. The Americans wanted the Europeans to spend more on defense, that sort of thing.

Q: Was there much cooperation among the Scandinavian countries, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark?

ROOT: Yes, one of the more interesting negotiations that took place while I was there was civil aviation. It was a Scandinavian group, not just a Danish group, the SAS, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. There were two fascinating aspects of that. One was the language they used to communicate among themselves. When they had their delegation meeting, they did not speak Danish or Norwegian or Swedish. They spoke English amongst themselves. But the other aspect had to do with a debate over a rather esoteric point having to do with fourth freedom. In other words can a U.S. airline carry passengers from Denmark to Germany. There was great debate over the words. We were using an English text of the bilateral agreement. Having invested quite a bit of effort in trying to learn the Danish language, I got out the Danish version of the same agreement. The Danish version supported the American position much better than the English

version did. I made this point, and they didn't appreciate that. But it sort of made the study of the language all worthwhile.

Q: Were the Finns part of any Scandinavian activity?

ROOT: Well, they were not part of SAS. Finnair is separate, not part of SAS. So in that sense, no. There were Scandinavian efforts at sometimes divorcing themselves from unpopular political aspects that the Americans or perhaps the rest of Europe were pushing, but these never got very far. Of course, the Norwegians are rather independent minded, but at the end of the day they would cooperate in whatever the issue is.

Q: Were you there when the Kennedy administration came in? Did that make a difference?

ROOT: Well, in my own reaction to the American political scene, I, like millions of others was fascinated by this new young face and the great spirit that he brought with him. As to whether it made a difference to the Danes, I think they too on that level were fascinated by the Kennedy phenomenon. It wasn't so much that they were unhappy with Ike, but Ike was kind of hands off. He let the establishment run with it. Whereas, Kennedy was very much hands on. Not that we felt it way out in Copenhagen very much, but the vibrations were felt.

Q: How about living in Denmark? I am told that the Danes in a way delightful people, they are a really hard people to get to know. Did you find that?

ROOT: Yes. As for living in Denmark, the first problem we faced was finding a place to live. There was practically nothing available for rent that was within our quarters allowance. We had by that time, a family of four kids. We were staying in a hotel for week after week. Finally, just to see what the inside of a Danish house looked like, we followed up on some for sale ads. The inevitable happened. We found a house that was just what we wanted. We bought it. This is most unusual for the foreign service. We were advised strongly against it because, when you are transferred out, you are forced to sell. As a matter of fact four years later it had appreciated almost a hundred percent. It was by no means a negative experience, but in this sense we found ourselves in a well established neighborhood. We went out of our way to get to know our neighbors. They responded courteously, with some surprise actually that we would approach them this way. One of them explained it this way. He said, 'You know the people on the other side of us. They came here 35 years ago. We know all about them, what they do and what their children do. Of course we never talk to them.' The explanation is Denmark is such a small country and so few families that if you get too close socially pretty soon you are obligated socially to so many people. Most Danes are either Hansens or Jensens or you know that sort of thing. So they keep their distance. This takes a physical form sometimes with a little hedge around. Even in the cemetery there is a little hedge around the graves. It is quite amazing. Yes, they do have that reputation and they know it, and they jealously guard it.

Q: How did you find on sort of the economic side, you know, sort of as you went to the various ministries, were you able to get pretty good figures, statistics, information, that sort of thing?

ROOT: Certainly compared with farther east, we would get a lot better information than from a government that didn't want to cooperate. But the data were not always reliable in the sense that they were not telling us what we wanted to find out. Sometimes the data would be not forthcoming because negotiations in an area such as aviation make us particularly want to know that data that would support our position in such a negotiation. But other than that it was a pretty open society. You could get data pretty easily.

Q: Did landing rights play a big role?

ROOT: Well, the Danes were not happy with receiving nuclear powered ships. This was a big issue for a long time. But as for aircraft, they were governed by these bilateral aviation agreements. Landing rights for something not covered by the agreement, that is something else again. Of course if it were an emergency, then there are emergency rules. If it was a charter aircraft, then you have to negotiate it, and if it was for military purposes you had to negotiate that too. But we weren't in a shooting war in those years, so I didn't experience that problem.

Q: What about Greenland?

ROOT: Greenland was one of those issues that became sufficiently important that it was political. Nevertheless, there were some economic aspects that we followed. One of our most pleasurable activities was folk dancing. We joined a Danish folk dance group. One of the reasons it was pleasurable was that the dancers, unlike most Danes, didn't speak English. So it gave us a chance to practice our Danish. It is customary to change partners. After one such dance the young lady looked at me, "Are you from Greenland?" in Danish. She thought I must be from Greenland because my Danish was such that I couldn't possibly be from Denmark. The only other part of the world where they speak Danish was Greenland.

Q: Did the Soviets, the fact that the East Germans were sitting pretty close to Denmark, did that intrude at all on what we were doing in Denmark at that particular time?

ROOT: Well there was a ferry between Denmark and Warnemunde in East Germany. There were issues there as to whether that was an avenue or leakage for the East Germans to escape, that sort of thing. The export control issues were mostly a West German-East German issue. The West Germans were insistent on being dominant in determining issues of trade with East Germany. There were no great issues that arose because of East Germany, just these little side things.

Q: How about American investment and trade opportunities in Greenland? Were there many?

ROOT: In Greenland?

Q: Not in Greenland; I mean in Denmark.

ROOT: Yes there were. We often had visitors who it was our privilege to show around. I remember one congressman came, and he wanted an appointment at Phillips. I explained that Phillips was in the Netherlands, not in Denmark. "Oh, no," he said, "it is Denmark." So we found

him a Phillips in Denmark and took him around. Of course, it was not the Phillips he wanted to see. Afterwards, he said, "You were right." Some times the interest was not as well informed as it should be. But there was great interest in investments, particularly in shipping and agriculture.

WILLIAM J. DYESS
Political Officer
Copenhagen, Denmark (1963-1965)

Ambassador William J. Dyess was educated in Europe, the recipient of numerous fellowships. He entered the Foreign Service in 1958. His career included positions in Belgrade, Copenhagen, Moscow, Berlin, the Hague (including an ambassadorship), and Washington, DC. Ambassador Dyess was interviewed by Charles Taber in 1989.

Q: Let's go on, now, to Denmark. You were in Copenhagen then from 1963 to 1965. How did that assignment come about?

DYESS: They were looking for a specialist in Eastern Europe for the number two political slot in Copenhagen. That's how I got picked. I was very pleased because, when I was there, the Danish prime minister was acting as a go-between between Khrushchev and Lyndon Johnson. As the resident Soviet and East European expert at the American embassy, I was the one who went along with the American ambassador or the chargé or whoever it was, to debrief the prime minister, the foreign minister or whoever it was who had most recently seen the Russians.

Q: Now you became the notetaker?

DYESS: Then I became the notetaker. I became the writer. I'd go back and I'd write up this stuff and I would draft the cables. That was really fascinating. That was a ring-side seat.

Q: Vietnam became a big issue in Europe about that time.

DYESS: Yes, as a matter of fact, I didn't realize how close I was to going to Vietnam. I was told that, since I was not married then, I was a prime candidate, but for some reason they wanted me in Copenhagen at this time. I was told later by folks in personnel that they had to hide me behind the door. Otherwise, I would have been plucked out for Vietnam. But I didn't lift a finger to get to Copenhagen or to stay out of Vietnam. The assignment came very early. It came by regular mail pouch early in March of the year that I moved in the summer. Oftentimes, people don't know where they're going until a few weeks before they go. This came early in March of 1963. This was when I was working on the JTS and then I got my car in the summer and, as I said, I got as far as Hamburg and had pneumonia. I was in the hospital for a while, but then got up and drove on to Copenhagen.

Q: Let's see, you also had presidential elections then in 1964. That was Johnson vs. Goldwater. Did the Danes hit you up on that?

DYESS: My undergraduate major was domestic politics. I predicted elections. In the 1960 election, for instance, I won the first color television set I ever owned by predicting the winner of the 1960 election and his popular vote. I was about 5,000 votes off. I flew back for the election. I was here for the last four or five weeks of the election, then would send reports back to the ambassador and to other members of the staff. I called the states, I was very close on the electoral vote. I missed one state. I miscalled South Carolina. The rest of the states I called. After the election was over, I went back.

Q: Whose idea was it for you to come back?

DYESS: My own.

Q: And management went along with it?

DYESS: Yes. I had some personal business I wanted to conduct at the same time, but I made it so that I could--this was personal leave. The government didn't pay for it. I paid for my trip back and I took personal leave. I came back to watch it. I just love American elections. [Laughter]

Q: That probably winds up Denmark unless you can think of any highlights there.

DYESS: No. A delightful place to live. I was married there. My wife is an American, but we were married there because our families were scattered around the world and that's a storybook city. So we were married in Copenhagen. I made friends there that I've been friends with throughout life. There are still Danes that I have contact with, and there are Americans that I still have close contact with.

RONALD D. PALMER
Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS
Copenhagen (1965-1967)

Ambassador Ronald D. Palmer was born in Pennsylvania in 1932. He received a bachelor's degree from Howard University in 1955 and a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1957. Ambassador Palmer joined the Foreign Service in 1957. His career included positions in Indonesia, Malaysia, Denmark, the Philippines, Togo, and an ambassadorship to Mauritius. Ambassador Palmer was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 15, 1992.

PALMER: Yet it was because of McPherson that I was assigned to Copenhagen and many good things opened up for me. The idea was that more youthful, energetic officers ought to go into the cultural affairs field. I was sent to Copenhagen in 1965 as a cultural affairs officer, largely as a kind of experiment. I don't know what the past had been as regards to the experiment, but I was sent to Denmark as a kind of new cultural affairs officer. I did my best in that responsibility, but

above all I tried to infuse the type of energy that perhaps was unusual in the field. I also had great areas of cultural ignorance, which I tried to do something about diminishing.

As cultural affairs officer I was responsible for the Fulbright Commission budget of almost \$200,000, which was a lot of money in those days. I got valuable management experience.

I was given 100 hours of Danish language instruction before the assignment. I never spoke Danish well but it helped me make contact with the worlds of theater, dance, music. I had a wonderful time for two years in Denmark. I liked the Danes and they liked me.

Denmark, of course, was a very interesting place from which to look at the United States. I was in there in the period 1965-67, which was a period of great enrichment in terms of relationships between the United States and Denmark. There had been a very deep and warm relationship already because a number of Danes had come to the United States and done quite well, especially in California but elsewhere also. Bunkie Knudsen, who had been Chairman of General Motors, was a great hero in Denmark. Indeed there were many Danes who were in the Detroit area who had become involved in the motor industry in the 1920s and 1930s. There were, of course, also important figures like Victor Borge...

Q: Pianist turned comic.

PALMER: It is funny, I think Borge is much more appreciated in the United States than he is in Denmark because his style of dead pan humor for the American is very funny but I think the Danes find it rather less funny. I had the pleasure of meeting all of these people. A great pleasure that I remember is meeting Lawrence Melchior, the great Wagnerian tenor, who by that time was rather old but still very lively. Melchior was a man who enjoyed his schnapps and beer. He was a lovely, cheerful, bright, pink cheeked man who it was a great pleasure to be around.

Q: Were you having problems at this period with the youth culture and the more leftist ones because of the Vietnam War or had this...?

PALMER: I was heading in that direction because I was making the point that there were a number of these people who were already great friends of the United States, but they tended to be somewhat older. At that time the real problem was to make contact with those who were younger and somehow try to develop the same kind of feelings and relationships between them and the United States the older folks had. I threw myself into this with great energy. For a period I was making a speech every couple of days on Vietnam and the United States. I also had a lecture presentation that I developed called, "Negro-White Relations in the United States," which I gave at the student club in Copenhagen and also at Aarhus University in Jutland.

I think the main thing that was in my favor in Denmark was that I made friends with several people who in turn helped me to make contacts with others. One of those people was a man named Svend Auken. He was married to Bettina Heltberg who had written a book at about the age of 20 or 21. She presently is the cultural editor for the great Copenhagen newspaper, "Politiken." Svend has become a leader of the Social Democratic Party. He has a chance perhaps

to become the Prime Minister one day. We have kept up our relationship. I went to visit them several years back in Denmark.

He was at the University of Aarhus. I got to know students there and talked to them. We brought cultural presentations to the university there. I had student friends at the University of Copenhagen and also at the student club there in Copenhagen. They would have parties and I would be invited. We would talk. The Danes have a very lively and sharp sense of humor and irony. I doubt that I convinced many who were to the extreme left, but those who were moderate left were prepared to listen. I think many people understood what the United States was trying to do. I think there were people who differed with us on our methods. Obviously there were many Americans who felt the same way. The critical thing is that people were prepared to listen.

NUEL L. PAZDRAL
Consular Officer
Copenhagen (1966-1968)

Nuel L. Pazdral was born in Missouri in 1934. He graduated from Stanford University and served in the U.S. Army. Mr. Pazdral joined the Foreign Service in 1961 and served in Denmark, Germany, Poland, Suriname, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

Q: 1967 wasn't it?

PAZDRAL: No, it had to be a little earlier. In any case they eliminated the national origins quota system. The reason they rushed me back into Polish language training was because they anticipated a need for several more visa officers in Warsaw with a change in the law which would remove the quota restrictions on Polish applicants. We had lines there a mile long and expected to be deluged with applicants. In fact it didn't happen. I well remember that just two days before my language test I got a call from the Bureau of Personnel, asking me to get in touch. I did, of course...one responds rather immediately to something like that. The first words were, "Well, I guess you have heard the bad news." And I said, "No." He said, "Well, you are not going to Poland." I said, "Really?" And he said, "Yeah, you are going to Copenhagen."

I told my wife this bad news and we packed our bags. A few days later I passed my Polish test and we went off to do consular work in Copenhagen.

That was my first overseas assignment. We got there in January 1966. Driving north across the north German plains to take a ferry was like driving across the Russian steppe. The wind was howling and it was freezing cold. You expected the wolves to come around the corner. We got to Copenhagen and spent a delightful two years there.

I did consular work of all varieties because the consular section typically was 50 percent short staffed. It was unusual in those days, but I guess the post was reserved to a certain extent for those who had health problems or something like that. For various reason some of those assigned

just never got there. So for almost all the two years I was there we were working fairly short-handed, which gave me a chance to do the whole scope of consular work. I did welfare and protection.

When we did get some people we started traveling and made several trips around the country picking up consular work that was just not getting done because we hadn't had the time, money or just, perhaps, the inclination to get out into the Danish countryside. I guess the Department's attitude was sort characterized by their attitude towards the language training. When I heard I was going to Denmark, I said, "Well, could I get the language textbooks from FSI so that I could at least study it a little bit? I speak German and could probably pick it up very quickly." "Well, we don't teach Danish." I said, "Really, why not?" "Well," they said, "because everyone there speaks sufficient English so you don't need the language and we just don't bother to teach it." Well, they teach it now. I found when I got there that it was useful if for no other reason than to be able to read the newspapers.

That was an interesting revelation for a new officer. By virtue of having to read the newspapers I learned the language and it wasn't too hard because of the German. But then when I went out on these trips a year later and would try to speak Danish to the people I was talking with, particularly municipal officials with whom I was dealing, who were quite senior, seemed really very impressed that someone would try to speak their language. And even though I was stumbling and making mistakes and not communicating nearly as well as we could have done in English, because they spoke perfect English, they responded to that in ways that made it worthwhile to continue to try to learn Danish. I ended up getting out of there with a pretty good score in Danish.

I would go out to places like Aalborg, which hadn't seen an American Consul in years and do an investigation for a pension, issue passports to elderly Americans who really couldn't get down to Copenhagen to get their passports without great difficulty. I don't think we were issuing them by mail.

I remember a curious story which might be useful for your record. I went to visit a very elderly woman who had been born in Iowa, to give her back her American passport. She and her husband were pensioners then and must have been in their eighties. I remember when I got there they had a huge American flag draped across one wall of their tiny living room. The flag was big and the room so small that the flag had to be bent around one corner. The other wall was covered by photographs taken from American magazines. She had obviously maintained her connection with the United States and had fond memories of it.

The reason I was giving her back her passport was that she had been expatriated. She was born in Iowa or Indiana and had married a dentist. The dentist died leaving his young widow with one child and no money or assets except his dentistry tools. She met then the third son of a Danish nobleman, who being the youngest son had no inheritance and was sort of seeing the world. He married her essentially for the dentist tools and set up a sort of traveling medicine show cum dentist parlor on a wagon.

Well, even in those days the Immigration Service was around and he was arrested by the state authorities for conducting dentistry without a license which is a crime. Having committed a crime in the United States he was therefore turned over to the Immigration Service and deported. She was deported with him because in those days under the Immigration and Nationality Act, if you were a woman and married a foreigner you lost your American citizenship. So she lost her American citizenship. Here is this poor girl from Iowa, widowed with a child and married to this Danish young man. They were deported back to Denmark.

Well, of course, the law changed not too many years after that and women who had been expatriated were then considered to regain their citizenship. Well by that time the Second World War had come along and they were stuck in Denmark. I guess at that point they had gotten so old that there was no point in going back to the United States. In fact, they probably weren't even aware that she had regained her citizenship. But the Embassy got wind of her somehow, I have forgotten how, and checked the records and found that she was one of those who should have an American passport. I was sent out to give it to her. It was really quite an occasion.

Well, I could go on quite a long time about consular work. You know, everybody says "Well, I could write a book about it."

Q: Let me ask a question. You had an ambassador there, Katherine White from New Jersey, a political appointee. What was she like as an ambassador?

PAZDRAL: Super. She was my first ambassador, of course, and, as you say, a political appointee. Her chief disability was that she had a husband who had been a stock broker and apparently made quite a bit of money and retired. He didn't have too much to do in Denmark so he would, for example, go off on Sahara expeditions, or be gone half the time. But when he was there he was a terrible nuisance, I must say, to some of us. He used to pinch the girls, by the way, so nobody really liked him.

But she was a very nice person, very competent too. She had been the public utilities commissioner in New Jersey and, I think, had something to do with the building of the New Jersey Turnpike, which, of course, was high up in the Party and therefore got her an appointment. But she was probably one of the better ambassadors that I ever had. I still remember her with a great deal of fondness. She would spend time with junior officers, for example. She was one of the few ambassadors I know who was able gracefully to tell you what she wanted you to do when she invited you over without making you feel like a servant or somebody who was invited just to fill a chair. She made people think that they were useful and told them exactly what she wanted to accomplish and why she was inviting them and did it in a very nice way. So my indoctrination to Foreign Service representation was actually given me by Katherine Elkus White and I thought stood me in good stead for years after that. I don't remember who the DCM was, as a matter of fact. But I certainly remember Ambassador White.

Q: Well then you left Copenhagen in 1968.

ANGIER BIDDLE DUKE
Ambassador
Denmark (1968-1969)

Ambassador Angier Biddle Duke was born in New York, New York in 1915. His Foreign Service career included positions in El Salvador, Washington, DC, Spain, Denmark, Argentina, and an ambassadorship to Morocco. Ambassador Duke was interviewed in 1989 by John McKesson.

Q: Moving on to your tour in Copenhagen, I assume that the role of Denmark in NATO was central to US concerns at the time.

DUKE: Yes. It was an interesting contrast to come from an isolated state to one that belonged to the European Community and the Western Alliance. Denmark was a member of the Common Market and of NATO and therefore I found myself in the mainstream of life in Europe. For me there were few problems about Denmark and the Common Market; and the Danish role in NATO was always a very minimal, marginal, one. While I was there I tried to have the Danes play a larger role in the common defense of Europe. For example, I tried to get the Danish fighter pilots to adapt their planes to carry marine mines. The geopolitical position of Denmark is such that in an emergency those mines could be dropped in the Skagerrak between the Baltic Sea and the North Sea which would effectively bottle up at least 40% of the Soviet fleet for up to several weeks. This was a brilliant idea and could put Denmark in a very important strategic position; but the Foreign Minister sat on it almost at once, saying it was unthinkable to so provoke the Soviet Union. I was respectful of their stand but critical of their unwillingness to live up to the implications of their alliance. That was what I was trying to do and I must report failure.

Q: Could you comment on contacts with the King and leaders of the country at the time?

DUKE: I presented my credentials to King Christian, who was a ceremonial figure with whom I did not otherwise connect much. I should emphasize that Americans were not very popular at the time because of the war in Vietnam.

The point of my story is that we had demonstrations against us, particularly when Vice President Humphrey was visiting me. I also had problems in meeting students at the universities in Copenhagen and Odense; they were hostile.

WARD THOMPSON
Consular Officer
Copenhagen (1968-1970)

Ward Thompson studied at Brown University and was sworn in as a Foreign Service Officer in 1966. His postings included Copenhagen, Seoul, Helsinki, and Gothenburg. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in February, 1999.

Q: After the A-100 course were you given any language training?

THOMPSON: Yes. This is always something that plays for laughs. My first assignment, as you know, was to Copenhagen, and at that time we had to have a world language to get off language probation, which was also curious, because when I took the Foreign Service Exam in 1962, it contained a language portion, and if one passed that then one had satisfied the language requirement. Well, the time I came in, which was five years later, the rules had changed, and world languages were important. So I was sent to German language training for an assignment to Copenhagen, and this, of course, was exposed soon enough after the occupation that German wasn't a tremendous help.

Q: Wasn't that popular, was it?

THOMPSON: No.

Q: But you'd already qualified in a language when you took the written exam.

THOMPSON: Well, I had no argument with the wisdom of the system because the language I qualified in was French, and I will never speak French no matter how much I study it.

Q: You've joined very many of your fellow Americans in that. Had you expressed an interest in going to Copenhagen, or was that just an assignment that was handed to you?

THOMPSON: No, I had expressed an interest in going to Helsinki. I thought, why not take a stab at it, and of course, you were in the position then of apportioning the assignments, and because it was 1967, I think virtually all of the other bachelors in my A-100 class were sent to Vietnam.

Q: Where you had already been.

THOMPSON: Where I had already been. And you explained that there were no vacancies in Helsinki, that there seldom are, but then I was very pleased when I was sent to Copenhagen with one other officer in my A-100 class. And that was Harry Cobb, who went on to have a brilliant career and left the Foreign Service relatively soon.

Q: Now you began there as a junior consular officer, I understand, in Copenhagen.

THOMPSON: Yes, Harry went there as a rotational officer, and I went there as a consular officer proper, and I spent two years there. The first year was as a visa officer, and the second year was in the other part of the consulate.

Q: What were your principal problems that you saw in the work?

THOMPSON: There were no problems. Indeed, we had a very small unit. There were three Americans, so we operated as a committee. And the principal problem at that time, in the late '60's, involved Americans who had fled the military either before they were inducted or after they were in the military, and had gone to Sweden. And occasionally they would drift over to

Copenhagen and we had to devise ways to take care of them so that we could satisfy both their requirements and the requirements of the US Government. There were many sensitive cases where we recognized that these were troubled young men, not all of them on drugs. The ones on drugs, I think, we had less sympathy for. But many decided that they wanted to go home, and the FSOs in the consular section had to negotiate to a extent with the folks in the defense attaché office. You couldn't go snatching people off the streets of Denmark, even though, I think, the Danish police were certainly willing to do that. This Vietnam problem was, of course, larger than the individual American. This was a major policy problem that the embassy was seized with. And again, since it was a small staff, as you know, since you've served there, the country team was pretty much a committee of the whole. I remember once when Angier Biddle Duke, who was used to loftier positions, came up to Copenhagen and held his first staff meeting, he said, "Now I want you all to go back and tell your junior officers..." and we looked around, and of course all of the officers in the embassy were in the room.

But the Vietnam issue was the issue overhanging everything that we did in the embassy, and as I've described it, it certainly reached into the Consular Section. And in some ways it reached into visa work because, as you know, we had a lot of restrictions on who could apply for visas and whether they were going to overthrow the U.S. government and whether they had been Communists. And the Vietnam War was causing a lot of the Danish leftists to join organizations that, frankly, we regarded as proscribed.

Q: Well, I know when I came to Copenhagen roughly seven, eight years later, the Vietnam problem was still with us, of course, and we had political differences with the Danish Government to the extent that we would not send an ambassador there for about one year, mainly because we were annoyed at some of the things the Danes were doing and saying.

THOMPSON: Well, there was another problem, which began just a few days after I arrived in Denmark and which was there when you were there and was, again, still there when I went back, and that was the B-52 bomber that crashed on Greenland, which crashed in early 1968. And this, again, reached into all sections of the embassy. It was a major problem, of course, ultimately compounding our relationship because of the Vietnam War and so forth. And the issue, as you know, was we had Thule Air Base, and we were not allowed to have nuclear weapons on Danish soil, including Greenland, and the plane crashed up there and it had four H-bombs on it, and there was a lot of, of course, ongoing relations with the Danes over this, which when I was back as political counselor had reached sort of another peak in a long history. But an interesting thing, I thought at the time, was our ambassador, who was Katharine Elkus White, of course had Washington's attention and *vice versa*. And her communication with Washington was through the Communications Section, where they had an almost instantaneous exchange by cable. There were no secure phones in those days, certainly not in Copenhagen, and this was a very sensitive subject. So I was struck by the fact that the ambassador had to take herself - she was a very dignified woman - into the inner reaches of the Communications Section and personally dial the call.

Q: Roll up her sleeves and get to work. But she was still highly respected when I got there.

THOMPSON: She was very good for our relationship. This is so important. I think that the form and the style are so important in a country like Denmark when you contrast it with the environment of the Vietnam. We would have six or seven thousand demonstrators going by the embassy, and yet the official relationship and the personal regard that the ambassador was held in were never affected.

Q: Did you have problems with the Americans who were in that radical commune in Copenhagen?

THOMPSON: Christiania.

Q: Christiania?

THOMPSON: Yes. We occasionally had individual problems, but they were consular problems. I remember one very young woman, a girl, actually, who came in one day to register a birth, and she announced that "I had a baby, and that's it." And she pointed to a basket on the floor. And so we, of course, acknowledged that it was an American citizen. The problem was that it didn't have a name, and she hadn't a clue as to what she was going to call it.

I mentioned the drugs, of course. I think my first consular case was when I was a duty officer, which I was half the time, of course, for the consular section. I had to go out to the Airport, Kastrup, where the Danes had a passenger whom they wouldn't let into the country and who was an American citizen. And they eventually let him in, but they put him in jail, at Vestre Faengsel, which was where a lot of the Americans were kept. And I caught up with him there, and he had recorded his entire arrival in Denmark, and this was more detail than we need here, but he had announced that he was Jesus Christ, and he had interviewed the customs and immigration officials on his way in, and he was very clever, but ultimately a nogoodnik, and just very typical of the Americans. The Danes didn't want them. They hated to let them into the country. They were obliged to in many cases because in those days, of course, there were not that many direct flights and people landed, often to change planes.

Q: How did the Danes react to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which came in '68 there?

THOMPSON: That was very interesting. I recall that vividly. There was a demonstration, this time, I think, about 10,000 people, and as you know, the Soviet embassy in Copenhagen is around the corner, half a corner, from the American embassy. And in fairness to these leftist organizations, virtually all of them turned out to condemn the Soviet invasion, and then for good measure, they continued up the street and protested Vietnam. And I think the sign I saw that was most critical of the Soviets said "Soviets = Americans."

Q: That's the worst thing you could say about them, wasn't it?

THOMPSON: I think that politically Prague was a turning point, that a lot of these leftists were intellectuals, and they had to come to terms with this, and as you know, the original Communist Party had never been able to withstand the Hungarian Revolution or the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and as a result there were spin-offs, and the SF, the Socialist People's Party,

which became very important—still a very leftist party—was a result of the falling out of the chairman with Moscow. The fact that they prided themselves on independence from Moscow did not make them friends with the United States at all, so instead of having one Communist Party to deal with we ended up with three.

Q: Did you have a chance to do any reporting outside the consular field while you were in Copenhagen, or were most of your reports limited to visas and citizenship?

THOMPSON: I did a couple of reports, and they were related to consular work. Unlike my colleague Harry Cobb, I never did rotate around the sections. I did a longer report on the issue of the American turncoats and how they were treated in Denmark, which the Political Section submitted as a political report. And of course, again, as a small embassy, I got involved in protocol work. Any time there was a visitor, a CODEL or something, we were pulled in and we became other than consular officers. I remember, for example, when Senator Ted Kennedy came. I ended up going with him to medical places because he was there in his capacity on some committee that dealt with international health issues.

Q: Did you have any opportunity to work with the ambassadors who were there while you were there, Duke and Katharine White?

THOMPSON: I would say that there was probably more distance between the ambassador and the Consular Section. And when I was dealing with overseas citizen services my office was literally at the far reach of the embassy, further from the ambassador's office than anybody else could be. We had fairly constant contact, but I think that—I told about Duke—I think that ambassadors there were a little self-conscious of the fact that they had rather small empires in those days. I know that Duke, of course, came as an afterthought.

Q: He'd been in Spain before.

THOMPSON: He'd been in Spain, and of course something was made of the fact that while he was in Spain they dropped a bomb.

Q: Right.

THOMPSON: But he'd been chief of protocol, and he was appointed to Denmark by Lyndon Johnson after Hubert Humphrey lost the election, and it was said that he hoped maybe he could go in and stay, but that was not the case. The Republicans didn't want him, so he was only there for a very few months. And then he was replaced by Guilford Dudley, who was unfortunately a prototype political appointee.

WENDELL W. WOODBURY
Economic Officer
Copenhagen (1968-1971)

Wendell W. Woodbury was born on April 29, 1920 in Crocker, South Dakota. He received his BA from University of Iowa in 1942 and received his MA from Harvard University in 1949. He served in the U.S. Army in World War II from 1943 to 1946 as a captain. As a member of the Foreign Service, he served in countries including the Dominican Republic, Algeria, Japan, and Denmark. Mr. Woodbury was interviewed by Virginia Crawford on June 4, 1993.

Q: How did you get from East Asia to Europe--to Copenhagen in 1968?

WOODBURY: Do you want the truth? Because I couldn't get a decent job in East Asia. I was the EA candidate for a long time to be the deputy U.S. director of the Asia Development Bank at the request of the Director because I helped set it up. Then EB came up with a candidate and Phil Habib told me, "You are not going to get that job because EA doesn't have any clout and Tony Solomon does in EB." He was quite right, but EA hung on for almost a year keeping me on tenterhooks. I then got vetoed for the job of economic counselor in Taiwan because the Ambassador, an old China hand, suspected that I was soft on Chiang Kai-shek. I got the assignment because of a man I had never met, the personnel officer for Europe, who knew my record in EA and in Tokyo and didn't care for the other candidates for the job. Logic sometimes has little to do with personnel assignments in the Foreign Service and the "Peter Principle" is alive and well.

Q: Who was the Ambassador to Denmark at the time?

WOODBURY: Actually we had three. Mrs. White, a political appointee, was there when I was appointed. Then Angier Biddle Duke, who had been chief of protocol, wanted to go abroad again so he intervened with the President who called her up at the airport on her way back to Denmark and said, "Kate, I am afraid you are going to have to resign because Angie wants the job." This was September or October of 1968 with a presidential election coming up in November, which you may recall, the Democrats lost. So Duke was ambassador for only a little over a month when he became a lame duck. However, he convinced himself that he might be held on by President Nixon because his name was Duke and Nixon went to Duke University law school on a scholarship. It is amusing how people can kid themselves.

Q: So you got another political appointee?

WOODBURY: Yes, a Goldwater Republican from Tennessee, Guilford Dudley. He was an international playboy and president of the insurance company that his father had founded. He brought the jet set to Copenhagen. He was a pleasant enough person but he didn't have the slightest idea of what an Ambassador is supposed to do. He was really a socialite playboy; he had an attention span of about ten to thirty seconds. His main concern was whether to wear miniature or full decorations when he called on the King and he would not accept our unanimous view that American Ambassadors do not wear decorations on their formal wear. They do now in Denmark! I think Dudley got his impression of diplomatic life from vodka ads.

Q: Was it a large embassy?

WOODBURY: Much too large. There were one hundred Americans there but they kept cutting the State Department side, mostly economic positions. BALPA program, the balance of payments hassle, remember that? The chancery became the Copenhagen branch of GSA, the housing for USG agencies operating in Denmark and related services.

Q: What were the economic problems that you were involved in with Denmark?

WOODBURY: Most of them we caused ourselves, but we really didn't have any major problems with Denmark. That is another of my theories; I think it would be much better in small, quiet embassies like that where we have mostly multilateral relationships to have a permanent Chargé d'affaires, because most of our problems are created by our ambassadors. You don't need a great big house; you don't need a chauffeur, etc. The Foreign Office doesn't care; in fact they would rather talk with someone who knows something. I think Ambassador Dudley went there because being a constitutional monarchy, Denmark has a King and there are many people around with titles. None of them have any power whatsoever and normally the American Ambassador deals with Social Democrats. I was the acting DCM for about seven months and had to deal with the Ambassador daily. Our relations were quite cordial, but it was very difficult. He had to be in charge and make the decisions, but I had to make sure he made the right decisions since he didn't know anything about the problems. He was completely dependent on his staff. We were always walking on eggs. It was not a happy relationship to put it mildly. I now understand why the failure rate for DCMs is so high. International diplomacy is a breeze compared to internal relations with amateurs in charge.

When I learned accidentally that the Ambassador had never met the head of the Social Democratic party, Mr. Krag, who had been Prime Minister for five years just previously and was only a hair's breath away from coming back again, I asked the Ambassador if he didn't think it might be a good idea to invite him to his house so he would know the man he might well be dealing with in the near future. "Well, I asked him, and he wouldn't come!" was his reply which shocked me. I went to see the Danish national who acted as our protocol advisor and told him what the Ambassador had said and asked, "What gives?" "Did he tell you the whole story?" "He had his secretary call Mr. Krag the night before and asked him to a reception." And the Social Democrats came back to power next election! Not that it made much difference. His relations with Prime Minister Krag could hardly be worse than with the conservative coalition that he dealt with during most of his incumbency. The Foreign Minister refused to receive him for weeks at a time, and Dudley refused to call on the career Vice Minister so we often had gridlock on urgent problems.

Q: But it was a pleasant posting, nonetheless, was it not?

WOODBURY: Of course, except for the embassy and going to work. I said that after the places I had been--the Dominican Republic under Trujillo, Japan during the Korean War, the Algerian war with its terrorism--I thought the Department was rewarding me for the past by giving me a sinecure. I found out, however, that when there is not enough to do, "the devil has work for idle hands." I won't go into some of those details, they are too sordid. They were troubles mostly caused by just plain foolishness and lack of leadership on the part of too many of the key members of the career staff with a vacuum at the top. Speaking of vacuums, I served six

ambassadors, all political. That must be close to a record. I hasten to add we never put Reischauer in that category.

GILBERT H. SHEINBAUM
Political Officer
Copenhagen (1968-1972)

Gilbert H. Sheinbaum was born in New York on April 20, 1929. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from New York University in 1950 and served in the U.S. military from 1951-1953. Mr. Sheinbaum entered the Foreign Service in 1957. His career included positions in Laos, Vietnam, Denmark, Madagascar, Malawi, the Philippines, and Switzerland. This interview was conducted by Tom Dunnigan on September 6, 1995.

Q: Well, following those exciting years, you were transferred to Denmark.

SHEINBAUM: I lived through Vietnam again in Denmark because having just come from Vietnam and the Embassy had many requests for a speaker, particularly on Vietnam; I went to many parts of Denmark talking about U.S. foreign policy and particularly Vietnam.

Q: Did you find any sympathy for our policy in Vietnam?

SHEINBAUM: Not much sympathy. But I found less antipathy than I expected.

Q: Well, you know, I lived through a little of that too after you'd gone and I found the people trying to be understanding, I'll put it that way.

SHEINBAUM: Yes, I didn't run into any hostility. In a couple of cases like one at the University of Copenhagen, boy, they were sharp-shooting me all over the place, as you can imagine. But then they invited Inger and myself up for drinks and we invited them home on another occasion. I saw opportunities there - these guys were tough but they were decent. A couple of the members of parliament -- Bodil Koch, do you remember Bodil Koch?

Q: Yes, I certainly do.

SHEINBAUM: I remember her as she sat in the front row when I gave a talk on, I think, U.S. relations with China. Okay, Nixon had not yet been to China, as best as I can recall. And you know, there I see Bodil Koch smoking a cigar in the front row and I thought to myself at the beginning, "Man, I'm going to be in for a tough evening." And she asked some very poignant questions, but we walked out arm-in-arm.

Q: Well, the Danes are that way. Now you served under three non-career ambassadors, all of whom were colorful people -- Angie Biddle Duke, Guilford Dudley. . .

SHEINBAUM: His wife was colorful, I'm not sure he was -- well, maybe he was. Were you there under Dudley at all?

Q: No. I came under Russell. How did the Danes react to these Ambassadors?

SHEINBAUM: I don't think they had enough contact with Angie Biddle Duke. He was there only about a month when Nixon was elected. He didn't want to go. He said, "I know people in both parties. I'm going to stay on here." He had to have a direct order to go home. He left in April; three months after the Nixon regime took over. So I don't think there was enough contact with the Danes to comment. Gilford Dudley was seen as a nice, quiet political appointee but the work was being done by Byron Blankenship and the embassy staff. That's the way. Fred Russell was a different type whatsoever and you know him better than I do.

Q: I'll emphasize the word "different." You were never in doubt as to Fred's views about things, and I don't think he was a success as an ambassador - but that's another story.

SHEINBAUM: Yes, I think so.

Q: Now, you moved into a political job in Copenhagen.

SHEINBAUM: That's correct. I was the number two political officer.

Q: Having spent a good part of your career as an economic officer?

SHEINBAUM: Well, I had already spent a couple of years as political officer. . .

Q: In Saigon, too. And now you're in straight political work in Copenhagen. What were some of the problems we had there that you dealt with?

SHEINBAUM: Well, we had, of course, the attitude towards Vietnam. We were getting some heat from the Danish Government about Vietnam. And some other places -- our policy in Africa, particularly Nigeria and the Biafra question (about which we were right, in the end), we were getting some heat on nukes in Greenland. Coincidentally, in the last few weeks, Tom, the Weekly Politiken from Denmark has been reporting a lot on secrets about our base at Thule that the Danish public didn't know about when I was there. I don't remember that there were any actual secrets about that base, it being a NATO base, but I guess with atomic weapons on the base, everybody assumed that . . .

Q: I don't think that would be a surprise to many people. Anyhow, I know Greenland was, when I arrived there in '72, we were dealing with fisheries problems with Greenland then and Ambassador Russell took great delight in handling that problem, I remember. Did the return of the Social Democratic government under Jens Otto Krag have any effect on our relations with the country?

SHEINBAUM: I think that it didn't have too much of an impact because we and Krag were concentrating on Danish membership in the Common Market -- the 1973 referendum. Somehow

or other, jointly we pulled off a coup by sending Anker Joergensen, who later succeeded Krag, off on a tour of Europe which gave him a feel what NATO was about and the Common Market was about because he had been anti. He came back a changed man, as I recall. Now I don't recall if that was while you were there. . .

Q: No. That happened before my time, his trip . . .

SHEINBAUM: That had a significant impact because then Krag was able to turnover the government to a believer.

Q: Yes, I was there when Joergensen succeeded Krag and I was there for the referendum too.

SHEINBAUM: And then Krag came here as the Common Market representative. We saw him a few times; I would go and speak with him, and he also liked dancing parties.

Q: That's right, he was the Common Market representative, wasn't he? He had charisma in a way that Joergensen didn't, but they were different individuals.

SHEINBAUM: Especially if there was a female around. Ask Helle Virkner, or Inger, for that matter. Not that he did anything inappropriate.

Q: Well, I always maintained that I was never in a country that enjoyed a party more than Denmark.

SHEINBAUM: I always liked their dinners because, even when there was only two couples at dinner, often it broke up into a little dancing -- a little cognac and dancing.

Q: Yes, that's right, it certainly did. Well, do you have any other comments about your tour in Copenhagen?

SHEINBAUM: I did, of course, meet my wife there. Two months after I arrived there, I was hit by a car while walking across the street. Oh, you're not aware of that story?

Q: No.

SHEINBAUM: It was six o'clock in the evening, I'd walked out of the embassy and I was going to Ernie Goodman's house for cocktails. I was headed for my car and I was crossing Oesterbrogade down at Stockholmsgade near Oesterport station. It was January 30th, the road was slightly damp, as things are in Denmark at that time of year. And this guy came along at too high a speed, went about ten feet further than he should have and hit me in the crosswalk. The light had been in my favor. I wound up in Kommunehuset for about forty days, and Inger was in my ward about the last ten days. The romance didn't begin until three or four months later.

EDWARD L. KILLHAM

**Consular Officer
Copenhagen (1971-1974)**

Edward L. Killham was born in Illinois in 1926. He received a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University in 1949, a master's degree from Columbia University in 1950, and a master's degree in public administration from Harvard University in 1957. Mr. Killham joined the U.S. Army during World War II and served from 1944-1946 in Europe. His Foreign Service career included positions in the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, Belgium, Austria, and Spain. Mr. Killham was interviewed by Robert Martens on December 18, 1992.

KILLHAM: I enjoyed Copenhagen very much and had a very stimulating time there for three years. We had a couple of general elections, a NATO Ministerial Meeting, and the Danish referendum on joining the European Community, a very contentious issue. After that, I got back, at least partly, into Soviet affairs when I went to NATO as the Political Director, on the International Staff. I chaired not only the NATO Political Committee, but the NATO Senior Political Committee as well, most of the time, especially when it dealt with guidance for the Allied delegations at the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions talks. MBFR covered, of course, conventional arms reductions with the Soviet bloc.

Q: This was when?

KILLHAM: This was 1974. A large part of our work on the regular political committee was drafting guidance for the CSCE negotiations in Geneva. Also we did a lot of analytical studies. I didn't draft them myself, but I worked on them. I didn't chair the meetings of area experts. I believe they still have meetings twice a year during which experts from various countries do a survey of what is happening in the Soviet Union. That was one of the activities under my supervision.

**PAUL K. STAHNKE
Economic Counselor
Copenhagen (1971-1974)**

Paul K. Stahnke was born in Illinois in 1923. He served in the U.S. military from 1943-1946 and received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, both in international relations, from the University of Chicago in 1950. Mr. Stahnke's career included positions in Germany, Italy, Japan, Somalia, Denmark, France, and Thailand. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on June 1, 1994.

Q: Well, when your time in Mogadishu was ended you moved to another post, which is quite a contrast, to Copenhagen where you were economic counselor, which I happen to know because I served with you there.

STAHNKE: I think it was then called economic and commercial counselor.

Q: Yes, that is right, I stand corrected. You had Bob Kemp working there with you too.

STAHNKE: Yes, that is right.

Q: There was a Social Democratic government. What was the attitude that you found towards the Common Market, which Denmark had not joined when you arrived?

STAHNKE: Denmark and the Common Market was probably my principal occupation in Denmark. We had very few, if any, trade problems with Denmark. The whole question of Denmark and the Community, yes or no, was of real interest to Washington and, of course, a burning question in Denmark. When I arrived in Denmark, discussions on enlargement of the Community had already begun. The entry of the Brits had been vetoed some years previous by de Gaulle and was again being considered together with the Danes, Norwegians and Irish. The Danes and the Norwegians had the biggest cultural problem with joining Europe and the issues were many, some of them quite foolish. I maintained close contact with the head of the EC section in the Foreign Ministry who, during my periodic visits, would tell me about the phone calls he received from Danish citizens, mostly expressing concern about Denmark joining the Community. For example, he told me about a lady from Jutland who expressed great concern about joining the Treaty of Rome. She said, "We left the Rome Church during the Reformation and we don't want to go back to it again." He had to explain very elaborately that this is not a religious affiliation but an economic one and potentially a political affiliation. But it was a major issue and most of my reporting was on Denmark's stand on the Community. Eventually they held a referendum on the issue.

Q: Yes. Of the countries you mentioned, I believe only Norway and Denmark had referenda.

STAHNKE: That is correct.

Q: With Norway going one way and Denmark another.

STAHNKE: That is right. Norway is now again thinking about joining it and maybe they will this time.

Once Denmark joined, my contacts with what was then called EEC, now the European Union, intensified. With enlargement, the problems of coordination among the embassies at member country capitals with our EC Mission in Brussels and with Washington increased proportionately. For example, where should demarches best be made? To member country representatives in Brussels, at capitals or both? To what extent should these demarches be coordinated? I made several useful trips to Brussels for such discussions and we informally worked out arrangements that proved to be satisfactory to all. As I recall, I sometimes had difficulty getting permission to travel to Brussels because of tight budgets from you and your predecessor but they were well worth the money.

The economic reporting from Copenhagen assumed a new dimension once Denmark was a member of the Community. We were no longer dealing purely with bilateral issues, which were

a very few, but dealing with the broader trade and other economic issues the US had with the Community.

Q: I remember one bilateral issue that arose just as I had arrived. That was the question of fishing off Greenland where the United States was involved. We had some difficulty with the Danish Greenlanders and our ambassador took a strong interest in this because he knew some of the Americans who went there fishing.

STAHNKE: Principally salmon fishing.

Q: That issue was soon resolved.

STAHNKE: A long-standing issue within the Community was the extent to which Greenland would be subject to Community rules, particularly with regard to fishing rights. That issue took a long time to resolve, but that was not ours.

Q: I remember one other economic problem while we were there and that was perhaps as much political as economic. That was the question of how a country with a magnificent social welfare system such as Denmark could go on paying for this system in the years ahead. The Danes already were finding that they were in deficit. Their taxes were very high, paying about 40 percent in income tax alone.

STAHNKE: Denmark, of course, was one of the Scandinavian socialist experiments which was very interesting to all of Europe and the United States and, indeed, to me personally. They provided birth to grave security, basically. The whole system came under extreme stress with the oil shock of 1973. Denmark is a country which has very few natural resources, aside from agricultural land. It has some oil, mostly offshore, which was in the process of being developed, but they didn't know how much they had and suspected, correctly, that it would not be very much. So the price of oil increased enormously for Denmark and had a serious negative effect on the economy as a whole as well as on the trade balance and the national budget. The pressure on the budget forced reduction in some of the generous social services offered in Denmark. I recall one incident which brought this home to me. Shortly after the "oil shock" I was on my way to the Foreign Ministry and my car was blocked by a large group of university student demonstrators. I got out of the car to ask about the demonstration and was told that they were protesting the reduction in the allowance they had been receiving from the government. Since their studies were tuition-free and most books free also, the allowance was really for incidentals. I told the small group that had gathered around me that they were very fortunate, compared to their counterparts in the US who had to pay tuition and all other expenses out of their and their parents' pockets. They were unimpressed but did clear a path for me to get through to the Ministry, a bit late for my appointment.

Q: I think this is one case where I will not ask you if you were given adequate supervision.

STAHNKE: Adequate, yes. Friendly also.

VICTOR WOLF, JR.
Consular Officer
Copenhagen (1971-1974)

Victor Wolf, Jr. was born in New York in 1927. His Foreign Service career included positions in Iraq, Iran, Turkey, The Philippines, Denmark, Germany, Poland, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 31, 1986.

Q: Moving from the Philippines to what would seem a much more benign consulate situation, you were assigned to Copenhagen as the consul general there. Did you have any problems there in the movement of people?

WOLF: We had two kinds of problems. One of them was the problem of the Asian and African visa shopper. Copenhagen is off the normal travel routings when you come from the Third World into Europe. Usually when you come from Africa, you come from the Middle East, you come from the Far East, you enter Europe at Rome or at Paris or London or Frankfurt. You don't get up to Copenhagen very much.

In the period that I was in Copenhagen in '71 to '74, a number of things were going on. You had the expelling of Asians from Uganda by Idi Amin. You had the Nigerian civil war or one of the periods of civil strife in Nigeria. So you had a large number of these people fleeing, and they were displaced. Now, the first problem that we encountered was the Asians from Uganda. For a variety of reasons having to do with British politics and British nationality law, the Asians did not have British nationality, neither did they have Indian nationality or Pakistani nationality, which would have been the two countries in Asia where naturally one would have thought returned to. But many of these people had no idea about India or Pakistan. They'd never been there, they knew very little about it; they were simply part of the Asian community in Uganda. They were then expelled. So they couldn't go to England, they couldn't or wouldn't go to Pakistan or India. They wanted to go elsewhere, and what more natural destination than the United States?

These people would then arrive with a Ugandan passport, which was still valid, and they would shop all over Europe trying to get a visa into the United States. And we had literally hundreds of these people rotating through all the different posts in Europe, and we received a very large number of these.

Q: Today is August 5, 1986. How did you handle this Ugandan problem?

WOLF: Unfortunately, it was a very difficult problem, because large numbers of them simply could not show that they were qualified to enter the United States as non-immigrants. They had been expelled from their home country, even though in many instances they were still carrying these Ugandan passports. The British wouldn't accept them. The Indians and the Pakistanis either wouldn't accept them or were very reluctant to accept them. And yet they would come in and say, "I'm simply going temporarily to the United States." Well, on the face of the situation, it wasn't

very credible. So the visa officers were required to deny the visas. It was not a very happy situation.

Q: By any chance did any of these qualify for visas to go to Spartanburg, South Carolina? I know that South Carolina had a minor program trying to help these people. They took about 50 families in.

WOLF: No, they did not. I'm frankly not aware of the Spartanburg program. That would have been somewhere between 1973-74. I don't know when you encountered that program. When would that have been?

Q: I heard about it when I visited Spartanburg in about 1974. Moving on, did you have any other refugee types, particularly from behind the Iron Curtain countries?

WOLF: Yes, there was a trickle then. The largest number were Poles. There were two kinds of Polish refugees or potential refugees. The first were Polish Jews who were expelled from Poland or placed under very harsh pressures to leave by the Poles. I suppose that would have been in the very, very late Sixties. Many of these Poles were members of the Communist Party who had been fairly loyal to the regime, but about that time, the Polish authorities required scapegoats, and Polish Jews are very convenient to be scapegoats in Eastern Europe.

So many of them finally got the message that there was simply no future for them in Poland, and they were permitted to go out illegally. The Poles did not actually issue them exit visas, because they didn't want to really get involved in the handling of Polish-Jewish documentation, but they facilitated, in effect, the illegal flight of Polish Jews.

Among the more notable ones was a man named Julius Katuski. Julius Katuski was the Polish U.N. representative in the very late forties and very early fifties, and he was a loyal member of the party, and he was one of the more vitriolic anti-American orators in the Security Council in the General Assembly. I saw him there when he was teaching at one of the Danish universities, and he was still in shock that the regime had turned on him.

We didn't get involved with those very much, because the Danes simply accepted them and they ultimately became Danish citizens.

The other category were people who, one way or another, found an occasion to get out. For example, cruise ships. The Stefan Batory was a cruise ship that periodically stopped at Copenhagen for tourism, and every time that ship stopped, maybe 30, 40 of these people would jump off. So we always had braced ourselves for the influx of these people.

Q: How did this work? Were many given visas to the United States?

WOLF: No, none of them were given visas to the United States there. The arrangement was the following. One of two things happened to them. The Danes accepted them, or whatever country they jumped off accepted them. The other procedure was that we would contact our mission in Geneva, and our mission in Geneva would, in effect, introduce them into the refugee processing

system, which was based on a series of refugee camps in West Germany, in Austria, and I think there was one in Belgium. The only task we had was to get transit or temporary visas from the Germans, the Austrians, or the Belgians, to permit them to go to that country, enter the camp, and in effect, be processed by the refugee voluntary agencies, the Immigration and Nationalization Service, and the other refugee resettlement countries.

SUSAN M. KLINGAMAN
Political Officer
Copenhagen (1972-1973)

Susan Klingaman was born in Albany, New York in 1937. She attended Oberlin College. She then received a Fulbright Scholarship and went to Germany. She then attended the Fletcher School in 1960 and entered the Foreign Service in 1963. She held her first post in Dusseldorf, Germany and later served in the Philippines, the INR, and Denmark. She was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: Well then in '72 whither?

KLINGAMAN: In '72...by that time I knew that I might have some influence over my next assignment so I had begun to make some contacts. I really wanted very much to go to Denmark. The reason I wanted to go to Denmark was that my family had become pen pals with a family in Denmark shortly after the Second World War. I don't think I mentioned that earlier but it was an interesting and really quite accidental happening. This family had received a box from the Red Cross at the end of the war with clothing in it which had our name and address on the box...or had our name on a Christmas card, because the Red Cross had taken it off of the box that we had used to take clothes for donation. This little Danish girl, Inge Frederiksen, decided to write us a thank you letter. It resulted in a steady correspondence between the parents and children of both families. It was really a nice relationship between our two families because the Danish family had four children and their ages corresponded to me and my brother and sister. I had met this family when I first visited Denmark during my Fulbright year in Germany. SI really wanted to go to Denmark. I obtained the support of the Danish desk in EUR and presented my reasons and I was assigned to the political section in Copenhagen by way of six months of Danish language training at FSI.

Q: So you went to Denmark in '72 until when?

KLINGAMAN: Are you ready for this? August of '72 until July 4, 1973, after six months of Danish language training. Six months of solo Danish language training from which I emerged as a 4/4 in Danish, a high proficiency level in both speaking and reading.

Q: Oh my God. Sounds like you were caught spying or something!

KLINGAMAN: No.

Q: Well we'll come to that. But I take it with a 4/4 in Danish, this is a four speaking, four reading Danish you must have melded with the language.

KLINGAMAN: First of all I was the only student, which helps. Secondly Danish is in some ways related to German, and I had a good mastery of German. The lexicon of Danish is closely related to German. The pronunciation, however, is not so I did have to learn the pronunciation. The grammar of Danish is much easier than German. It is much more similar to English.

Q: They don't put the verb at the very end?

KLINGAMAN: No, it's much more an English subject, verb, object word order. The pronunciation is horrendous. That is where it was very helpful to be alone with a Dane. My instructor was not a language instructor as such. He was an elderly gentleman who was a portrait painter who had been brought in by FSI because he was a Danish speaker. I was highly motivated to learn Danish.

Q: Arriving there in '72 what was the political situation in Denmark?

KLINGAMAN: Well the domestic situation in Denmark was stable but very interesting always because there are a number of political parties in Denmark, I think at that time six or seven. They run from the left wing socialist to the right wing conservatives with various shades of liberalism in between. At that time on the domestic political front there was a new issue. That was the rise of an anti-tax party for the first time which threatened to take a large proportion of the vote. It was led by a man named Glistrup who was not a veteran politician at all and that was the interesting aspect. When I was there they held elections and that party won as I recall close to ten percent of the vote. This was significant in Danish politics because it gave this anti-tax party some potential power as a king maker or coalition maker or whatever.

Q: They were anti-tax...was it full anti-tax or how did they come out?

KLINGAMAN: They wanted tax cuts. Taxes were very high in Denmark and one of the first things you notice there is that nobody but nobody wants to work overtime because it doesn't pay. It is all taxed away. So there was strong sentiment that taxes were too high but at the same time of course we do like our welfare state and Denmark is very much a welfare state...was at that time and still is, cradle to the grave you are taken care of. But there was an awareness that this was also stifling initiative, stifling anything that could require overtime work.

Q: Who was your ambassador at the time?

KLINGAMAN: We had a political appointee named Fred Russell.

Q: What was his background?

KLINGAMAN: I believe he was in the hardware business and had made large political contributions.

Q: You are giving me that sort of shaking your head, rolling your eyes...

KLINGAMAN: Well let me just say this. Denmark like other countries is a very nice place to be and so it was a favorite for political appointees. The Danes were becoming increasingly tired of receiving political ambassadors who did not seem to know too much about Denmark. I say this with some hesitation because I know this is all open information here. The ambassador was something of an embarrassment at times because he was quite a womanizer at his own cocktail parties and he was also quite a drinker. So at times the Danes felt very uncomfortable with him and at times some of us felt uncomfortable with him also.

Q: He sounds like a boor.

KLINGAMAN: I admired our DCM greatly for being totally professional and managing the situation very well.

Q: Who was the DCM?

KLINGAMAN: Tom Dunnigan.

Q: Oh, yes, Tom does interviews for us.

KLINGAMAN: I would say the situation was managed well, but the Danes really would have appreciated I think a career diplomat as ambassador once in awhile. Although, I'm sorry I don't recall the name now, but there had been a female ambassador, a political appointee I think, who had been highly regarded by the Danes.

Well, apart from the domestic politics in Denmark the main issue that was going on related very much to my job in INR previously. The main issue was whether or not the Danes would join the common market. They had applied along with the British and there was a public referendum on that issue when I was in Copenhagen. The Danish government's policy was pro-entry, obviously, because they had applied for entry. The public was not wholeheartedly behind it. Denmark is a small country. It was once a large country but had become a small country, a very proud country, and there was concern among many Danes that this would really diminish Danish sovereignty. There was concern that membership in the EC might undermine the Danish social welfare programs and in general threaten Denmark's freedom of action. So there was a referendum while I was there in '72. The Danes did vote for entry into the Common Market at that time.

Q: What was their concern about Denmark and NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, at that time? It supported NATO?

KLINGAMAN: Denmark was a member of NATO. But the Danes were not always fully supportive of the U.S. positions in NATO. I don't really think it was a public issue in the sense that there was any serious thought among most Danes that they should withdraw from NATO but the Danish people were not as pro-NATO as people in some other countries.

Q: What about making contacts? I've heard that the Danes are very charming, very nice people but basically very difficult to get to know.

KLINGAMAN: Well I didn't have problems because for one thing I spoke good Danish. I was the best Danish speaker in the embassy, and the Danish family who had been pen pals with our family lived in Copenhagen and I spent time with them. As I said before I had met them when I was a Fulbright student in Germany and had gone up to Denmark and visited them. It was a really nice relationship between the two families because that family had four children and their ages corresponded to me and my brother and sister. So I had a good relationship with this family, and I saw them often. I spent Christmas with them. I really became quite well acquainted with Danish culture through them. .

The Danes are relaxed, friendly, pleasant people. They are very family oriented and they treasure their privacy. They are perhaps not easy for most foreigners to get to know but even in developing political contacts in Denmark, I didn't have problems. I think a lot of it had to do with the fact I spoke Danish. There were some women parliamentarians in the Danish Parliament and there were some women journalists I got to know. But I also had professional contacts with Danish men in the Parliament and the foreign office. One of the duties I had was to periodically visit the foreign office after they joined the Common Market to get a debriefing from them on the political consultations going on among the EC members on foreign policy issues.

Q: How were relations with the Danes and Germany at that point?

KLINGAMAN: Most Danes did not like Germans...with good reason. The Germans in the Second World War occupied Denmark. Danes didn't like it, for example, if Americans pronounced the name of their capital city, Copenhagen, the way the Germans do, with a short "a" rather than a long "a." That is what most Americans do, thinking it is Danish but in fact the Danes do not pronounce the name of their city the way the Germans do and the Danes preferred foreigners to pronounce it the American way. The Danes didn't have much love for the Germans, but the two governments had good relations.

Q: Are there any other issues you were looking at, was the embassy looking at Nordic issues too? Were the Danes at that time really looking closely at the Swedes and Norwegians?

KLINGAMAN: They always had a close relationship with the Swedes and Norwegians. Of course Norway and Denmark were united for awhile as one country. They had a close relationship but Sweden of course is neutral and Denmark and Norway were both members of NATO. Only Denmark joined the Common Market, however. There always has been sort of a Nordic solidarity and a feeling and so on. But the Danes are very good at looking out for their "little Denmark".

Q: Was their concern at that time about their almost close neighbor East Germany and the Soviet Union? Was this a preoccupation of the Danes?

KLINGAMAN: It probably was a preoccupation of the government. I never sensed that the public felt uneasy about it, although East Germany was just across the water and the Soviet

Union wasn't far off. But Denmark was in NATO. The Soviet Union had a very active embassy in Denmark and that concerned us. But when I was there the major issue for the people and the political parties was whether or not Denmark would join the EC. That was the main concern. Did they need to do this?

Q: How about exports?

KLINGAMAN: The Danish were active traders and their economy was doing very well at that time.

Q: I recall at that time Danish furniture was 'the' thing.

KLINGAMAN: And the Danish had good ties out there in Thailand, where it came from!

Q: The move on July 4, 1973, why?

KLINGAMAN: Why did I leave Denmark where I was having such a good time and speaking Danish? Well, I left kicking and screaming. My job was abolished. It came as a terrible shock to me. I had arrived in Denmark in late August 1972. I had a very tough time finding an apartment that I could afford in Copenhagen; I did not want to go out to the suburbs. So I lived in a hotel almost four months before I did manage to find an affordable apartment near our embassy. Then shortly after I moved into that apartment word came that my job was abolished. The reason for the abolition of my job was not that it wasn't needed and it wasn't that the embassy didn't need to have a good Danish speaker; it was simply that the State Department had to abolish a number of positions in Western Europe in order to staff U.S. government trade missions in Eastern Europe. Remember I was talking earlier in this interview about promoting U.S. exports and so on? So it came to roost on my shoulders so to speak.

The European bureau had to provide those positions. They took positions out of Western Europe to staff the commercial posts in Eastern Europe and mine was one of them. I was very, very upset at the time because I had Danish; the Department had invested six months of time and money and my time in training me in Danish. The embassy was very upset about it. I was ready to resign. I was committed to the Foreign Service but I wasn't committed to being kicked around. So I sat down and wrote a letter; my boss told me who to write to. So I sat down and I wrote a letter to the director of personnel in the State Department and set forth why I felt I should stay.

Among other reasons I stood to lose a lot of money because I had had to put down a large security deposit on an apartment which was non-refundable, various amounts of money up to the tune of about \$1,500 which I stood to lose.

Q: That is big money there.

KLINGAMAN: Very big money for me or anybody. Also I was looking for a promotion and I thought well, less than a year in Denmark and now I am going to go off to a new job and what is this going to do to my promotion possibilities? I should say that I had been really fortunate in moving up pretty rapidly. I had joined the Foreign Service as a 7, an 07 at that time, which was

the second rung and had been promoted when I was in Dusseldorf to 6. Then I had been promoted to 5 when I was in Manila. I was looking to advance to an O-4. But by 1972 I had already been four years in grade, almost five years actually. I was very concerned about my promotion chances. And I was very concerned about the fact that I had learned this language that I could not use anywhere else and so on.

So out came the executive director of EUR (European bureau) to visit Copenhagen. Her name was Joan Clark. She was making a trip to various posts in Europe and she came to Copenhagen and talked with me. I didn't know her. I just knew she was the executive director of the European bureau and was somebody important. But I didn't care how important she was, I would tell her how I felt. She asked where I wanted to go next and I said I wanted to stay here in Copenhagen, and she got a very pained look on her face and said I could not stay here, so where would I like to go? I said I did not know but I would like to have a good job in a political section. She asked me how my German was and I said I was a 4/4+ plus in German. She looked sort of stunned and she said how about Bonn, Germany? And that is in fact where I went.

Looking back on it of course it was a very good opportunity. It was a wonderful opportunity. I was still not happy about leaving Denmark and the Danes were not happy either. One of the Danish journalists wrote an article in a major Danish newspaper saying here is an officer from the American embassy who speaks fluent Danish but she is not staying, she has been called to Germany. They did not like it. Germany of all places!

TOMAS J. DUNNIGAN
Deputy Chief of Mission
Copenhagen (1972-1975)

Thomas Dunnigan was born and raised in Ohio. He attended John Carroll University, and after graduation served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1946. Mr. Dunnigan served in London, Manila, the Executive Secretariat, the National War College, Bonn, the Hague, Copenhagen, Tel Aviv, and with the Organization of American States. This interview was conducted by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

Q: I want to move on here; we'll come back to Holland later. You went to Copenhagen from '72 to '75 as the deputy chief of mission under Ambassador Philip Crowe, correct?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I started with a much more colorful man, Fred Russell, who was a political appointee. But we were only together four months, and he departed, never to return. And then there were almost eleven months when we had no ambassador, so I was chargé during that period, and then Phil Crowe was appointed.

But the reason we weren't appointing one, we were mad at the Danes. The Nixon administration was quite upset with them because of their condemnation of our Christmas bombing of Hanoi. They had been very strongly opposed, and the prime minister and others had said things that were repeated in Washington. And so they just let them stew in their juice.

But when we had a NATO ministerial meeting in Copenhagen in June of '73, Secretary Rogers came over. And Walt Stoessel, the assistant secretary for European affairs, was along, and Walt told me that we were going to appoint an ambassador, going to probably appoint Phil Crowe, who was then in Norway, to come down. It would take a little while, and he finally got there in September. But the Danes, the queen even, apparently asked Rogers at that time to please send us another ambassador.

Q: Well, you know, looking at this, although I'm a retired professional Foreign Service officer, it's always struck me that using the appointment or non-appointment or withdrawal of an ambassador when relations are somewhat strained is a peculiar way to do business. And why would the Danes care whether they're dealing with a deputy chief of mission, a chargé, or an ambassador? What difference does it make?

DUNNIGAN: Prestige. They felt always that an ambassador had a higher in, in the State Department, and that's in prestige, too. Now the Swedes didn't have one, either, for a long time. We were also mad at them for the same reason.

Q: Oh, yes. And the Nixon administration liked to show their...

DUNNIGAN: Liked to show that pique--which it is. In some ways, it's like a spat between young children, you know. It has some of that about it. However, I didn't mind being chargé, you know, from my point of view. But, from a higher political point of view, it was not a good idea.

Q: Okay, the prime minister and all made these comments about the Christmas bombing. What did you do about this? I mean, were you given orders to go and tell them how unhappy we were?

DUNNIGAN: Well, I don't think I talked to the prime minister. I mentioned to the Foreign Office, you know, that this was not going down well in Washington and they should know that. Well, they knew it very well, from their reporting from their ambassador there. There was no doubt in their minds about that.

During that period, I kept up my contacts with the Foreign Ministry. Perhaps not as closely as they had been before, but we certainly did all that was required. We had good political counselors and economic counselors. We've always had good relations with Denmark, but I think there was a little less warmth at that moment.

I remember their ambassador in Washington came home in June of '73, and he took me out to dinner and said, "Look, we've got to get an ambassador in here."

And I said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, you know why there isn't one."

"Well, I know. I keep raising it in the department, but they don't tell me anything."

Q: That was really the sort of major driving thing during that period of time?

DUNNIGAN: That was the major feature. We, of course, were always trying to encourage the Danes to do more in NATO. They do less than any other power, basically, and they are the wealthiest country in NATO Europe per capita. They could do a lot more. Well, it never had, since the days of Hagar the Horrible, a very large military force, or since medieval days, anyhow, so it's not in their tradition. They put up no fight against the Germans, compared to the Dutch. They are a small country that acts like a small country, unlike Holland, a small country that acts like a large one.

Q: Well, you were just mentioning the ambassadors you had. First, Russell, you mentioned he was sort of a character. In what way did you observe this?

DUNNIGAN: He sacked his last DCM. He just didn't like him. The DCM had tried to behave like a normal DCM, I guess, and give him advice on how to do things. Russell felt he was talking down to him--he sacked him. He called Middendorf, my ambassador, and said, "Bill, I need a DCM. Do you have a good man on your staff?"

And Middendorf said, "Well, I've got Tom Dunnigan here. He's going to be leaving this summer. Why don't you try him?"

So, the next thing I know, Russell's on the phone with me and said, "Can you meet me in Brussels next week so we can get acquainted?"

So I hopped on the train and went down to Brussels. He was there for a meeting of our ambassadors in the EC countries. So we met in a hotel for an hour, and he talked for fifty-five minutes, and I talked for five. Mostly I listened for fifty-five minutes.

He was a tall, striking, white-haired, good-looking man, with very intense views. Had quit school at twelve to support his family. Had gone to work during the war in the Douglas Aircraft factory in Los Angeles, was a marvelous tinkerer, working with his hands, and ended up as a vice president of Douglas Aircraft. Then founded his own firms out there. Went into real estate; started to build shopping centers. Made beaucoup money.

Had several chips on his shoulder about the size of small two-by-fours, I think largely because he felt that he didn't have the education these other people did, but, by God, he'd made his own way through hard work. And the only way to treat a competitor, he once told me, was to drive them into the ground, and then you could deal with him. But you had to push him into the ground first. And this was pretty much his way.

Well, he was very kind to me. I had no problems with him, no blowups in our four months together. But I would go home every night to my wife and say, "Just pour one large martini. I got through another day." The whole staff, you know...

His main interest was not in our relations with Denmark, it was in organizing the embassy and making it the most smooth-run organization...

Q: Oh, my God. I mean, particularly a small embassy like that.

DUNNIGAN: He spent hours, and I mean hours, on redesigning the commissary, because he said the shelves were too far apart. And he dragged me down there with the admin. officer and the GSO and the commissary man, and we'd go through that, and he'd say, "Now, look, I built these shopping malls, and I put in grocery stores, and I know if you have a shelf that's eight inches, you can get in so many packed cans. By the way, we have three kinds of coffee. That's wasteful. We'll have one brand only in here. We'll make a lot more." We spent a lot of our time doing that, building a very modern commissary, up to modern American standards à la Russell. Thing like that were most amusing.

He'd bedeviled the military, because we had an APO in our MAAG office.

Q: Army Postal...

DUNNIGAN: Army Postal Office, yes that we were allowed to use at the embassy, but it was really a part of the Military Assistance Advisory Group, which sat in another building about three miles away. That wasn't good enough, because he had to wait three hours for them to truck the mail to him. He wanted it in the basement of our building. And the MAAG chief said, "Oh, sir, it says it's got to be in a military facility. It can't be in the embassy." Well, the next thing you know, he's calling the four-star general in EUCOM who's in charge of all these, and he said, "I want that thing moved!" Within three weeks, we had the post office in the basement of the embassy. Little things like that got done.

One day, he was going out to meet a very important left-wing Danish politician to talk about Vietnam. This man had issued a blast at us about some atrocity he felt we'd done. We knew he wasn't right, but the ambassador said, "I'm going to straighten him out."

I said, "All right." He had instructions, and I said, "Now, would you like me to go along and take some notes, or Ed Kume, our political officer?"

"No," he said, "I don't need any of you people! I'll do it all."

Well, he came back and slammed the door after a couple of hours. And nothing ever went to Washington. He said that this fellow was a knot head. He couldn't get through to him. He couldn't get through. The guy didn't have anything to say at all, he just kept repeating that one line. And that was all we ever heard about the incident.

He did not believe in political reporting. Once, having told me he didn't want any more reports to go out to the department, he said, "They've got too much paper in Washington now. There's no use sending them anything more." So we had to adopt certain methods to get off telegrams and dispatches.

Q: How would you do it?

DUNNIGAN: They would come to my desk and I would initial them out, and when the come-back copies would come in the morning, we would not screen them through the old man. And he

never caught me, and if he did, he never called me on it, because he realized certain things had to be done. You just couldn't shut off reporting.

Anyway, that was a colorful period. Then Crowe came, and he was quite different. He was urbane, sophisticated, a man of the world. This was his fourth embassy. He told me when he got there, "Tommy, my doctor said, because of my bad ticker, I shouldn't work after noon every day, so I don't." So he'd come in about nine and work until noon and disappear. And he led a very active social life. He'd go riding once in a while, but socially. His wife never came.

Russell didn't have a wife. He said, "I made my wife the richest divorcee in California." Not that he lacked friends. Neither of them lacked friends whatsoever.

Crowe would get up for the big things. I mean, we could get him up for those, but he left the running of the embassy pretty much to me. So we got along well. Again, he couldn't have been nicer to me personally. We had no real problems in that regard. He ended up marrying a young Danish lady.

CHARLES E. RUSHING
Political Counselor
Copenhagen (1974-1978)

Charles E. Rushing was born in Illinois in 1929. He received his bachelor's degree from Augustana College in 1951 and his law degree from Duke University in 1954. He served in the US Army from 1954-1955. His career included positions in Italy, Eritrea, Southern Rhodesia, Congo, Laos, Liberia, Denmark, and Ireland. From 1985-1991 he served as an ambassador to the UN in Geneva. Mr. Rushing was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in July 1996.

Q: Following your completion of the Defense College, you went to Copenhagen as political counselor and worked for Ambassadors Crowe and Dean. You were four years in Copenhagen, from '74 to '78. What were your principal concerns there as political counselor?

RUSHING: Two areas. One was the NATO connection, of course. I went down to Brussels frequently for meetings.

Q: The NATO connection, of which Denmark does not pull heavy weight.

RUSHING: It does not pull heavy weight and a proportion of the population there was not too happy with the Danish membership in NATO. The other main area was the EEC [European Economic Commission], the U.S. relationship with it. I did the reporting and instructions. Had you gone when Denmark had the presidency?

Q: No, I was there, and we had a meeting in December of '74 in Copenhagen. A big meeting.

RUSHING: That was something that was of interest. We did some local political reporting, too. We were concerned about the steadfastness of Danish membership in NATO. We were also concerned with the Left wing of the Social Democratic Party.

Q: There were several governments during that time, weren't there? There was Poul Hartling and Anker Joergensen. Say a few words about this rather odd character, Mogens Glistrup, and his Anti-Tax Party.

RUSHING: He was the "Le Pen" of Denmark, wanted Denmark out of the EC and NATO. I remember one night at dinner at the ambassador's, he was one of the guests and the wife of a fairly leftist member of the Social Democratic Party was there and they got into a terrible verbal fight. It started out in English and then quickly shifted to Danish. My Danish wasn't good enough to follow it. Talk about an embarrassing moment.

Q: It was during your time there that we were anxious to upgrade the Danish and other NATO country air forces. We were trying to sell them our new F-16. Can you say a little bit about that situation and how it worked out in Denmark?

RUSHING: We had a very wise DCM [deputy chief of mission] in Denmark at that time who saw that the basic element that was going to swing the deal one way or the other, at least in Denmark, was going to be a political question. So, he designated the political counselor (me) to be the control officer for this project. In the other countries in the European Consortium (Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands) control responsibility in the U.S. embassy was in the hands of either the MAAG [military assistance advisory group] or the Air Attaché.

There was a two stage process. The first stage was an elimination contest among two or three American airplanes that would be competing for the place of being the official U.S. candidate. The American choice would then compete with non-U.S. fighters such as the British Jaguar, the French Mirage, and the Swedish Viggen. General Dynamics won the fly-off, so to speak, with the F-16. Interestingly enough, at the time, the so-called fly-away cost was \$9 million a copy. The fly-away cost today is many times that amount.

As you know, this was a major U.S. Government effort. I spent a good deal of time going back and forth to Brussels, the center of the project, and lobbying members of the Danish Parliament. It was the Parliament, in particular, the Defense Committee of the Parliament, that would make the recommendation to the Danish Government which plane the Consortium should buy. Fortunately, the ranking member of the Defense Committee was a friend of mine. That helped.

In the last days of the competition, the Swedes came in with a particularly attractive offer. My Parliamentary friend said that had they made it a month earlier, the Danes would have been forced to go with the Viggen. But it was just too late in the process and support for the F-16 was solidifying in all of the other countries.

Q: So it all worked out well and we sold the F-16, which has proved to be an excellent airplane. You had a labor officer there with you in Denmark as part of the Political Section. Tell me something about his work and why we had one there.

RUSHING: Labor and the labor unions were politically extremely important. That was true even under a right-wing government. Because of their proportional electoral system, coalition governments were almost always the result. The Social Democrats were usually the strongest political party. Denmark remains a welfare state. The resulting system was very expensive. Many of the benefits taken for granted in the 1970s may have been reduced.

Q: It was important for us to keep in close touch with the movement in the Danish Labor Confederation. Why was it so difficult to form governments in a country like Denmark? It's a homogeneous country, basically, and yet it seems splintered when it comes to politics.

RUSHING: As mentioned earlier, Denmark has a proportional electoral system which is common on the continent. This is unlike the system in the United States and Great Britain where "the first past the pole" wins. One of the effects of the proportional system is that a single party rarely if ever emerges with 51% of the vote. So, there's always a need to negotiate and to bring other parties in to form a government. In Denmark, this problem was compounded because a relatively low threshold was demanded for parliamentary representation. For example, if a party receives only, say, five percent of the overall vote, it would win at least one seat in Parliament. I think that during my time, there were seven parties in the Parliament.

Q: So, as a result, you have a number of small parties and they all have to be taken into account when forming a government. Did you find the Leftist influence, the Communist influence, very strong during this period in Denmark? Anti-American feeling?

RUSHING: There was a considerable amount of anti-American feeling from the Left wing of the Social Democrats, intensifying with the Socialist People's Party and the Communists. Much of it focused on our role in Vietnam. There were frequent demonstrations in front of the embassy.

Q: You mean in front of our embassy?

RUSHING: Yes.

JOHN GUNTHER DEAN
Ambassador to Copenhagen, Denmark
(1975-1978)

Ambassador John Gunther Dean was born in Germany in 1926. He came to the United States by way of Holland in 1938. After serving with the OSS during World War II, he graduated from Harvard in 1947. Since joining the Foreign Service in 1951, his career has included positions in Saigon, Phnom Penh, Bamako, Paris and Laos.

Q: In May 1975, you came back to Washington?

DEAN: I came back to Washington. I presented myself to the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and many other members of Congress. The legislators were very cordial in these meetings and the Executive Branch assured me that I would get another ambassadorial assignment. I was told to take a good vacation because I needed it after these stressful months. I went to Switzerland, took my family on a trip to Italy and showed them Rome, Venice, Florence, Siena, and other cultural sites of the West. By telephone, I was told that I was under consideration for an ambassadorial assignment: either Morocco or Romania. At that point, I was more interested in getting some of my weight back than in future assignments. I had lost more than 15 pounds by the time I came out of Cambodia. One day I received a phone call from Larry Eagleburger, Under Secretary for Management, who said: "John, there is a change of plans. We would like you to go to Copenhagen. Come and see us in Washington." In Washington, I was told that the Embassy in Copenhagen had become available. This was a post mostly reserved for political appointees. Hence, I was one of the first Foreign Service career officers to go to Denmark. I suggested to the State Department I would like to learn Danish. Since I was fluent in German, had a smattering of Dutch, I was confident I could learn basic Danish in a relatively short time. Above all, I was trying to find a way to show to decision makers that having a career Foreign Service Officer at a post could make a difference to our foreign policy. Speaking the language of the host country was a step in the right direction. I was sent to the Foreign Service Institute in Washington and learned a few phrases in Danish before leaving for Copenhagen. When I arrived in Copenhagen airport, the local press was waiting for me and I gave my first statements to the press in Danish. Since Denmark never had an American ambassador before who even tried to speak Danish, the local media was, on the whole, very kind to me during my tenure.

Well, that was the beginning of a very interesting assignment to the Court of Denmark. I don't think I got the appointment as ambassador to Denmark because of any similarities I might have with Hamlet. I don't think I had that much of a problem making up my mind on decisions. But I think there was a clear effort by the administration to reward me for my work as Ambassador to Cambodia, under extremely difficult circumstances.

Q: You were in Denmark from when to when?

DEAN: From September 1975 until the summer of 1978.

Q: Who had been ambassador before you?

DEAN: Ambassador Crowe. Crowe was a political appointee who I had known socially. Crowe had been in the Information Service during the Second World War. After the war, he served as U.S. Ambassador to South Africa, Norway, and Denmark. While in Denmark, his wife, who had not accompanied him to his various diplomatic postings, divorced him and he married a very attractive young Danish lady. He had a child with her. Later on I met the lady after Phil Crowe had died. We helped his widow from the second marriage to return from the U.S. to Denmark, after Phil's demise. Phil Crowe was a well-known and likeable person.

Q: Could you tell me about the political situation in Denmark when you arrived, and what were American interests there?

DEAN: In 1975, the Vietnam War was a major subject in all of Scandinavia. It was a subject where our Scandinavian friends, especially the young people, had more empathy for those who demonstrated against our war effort in the United States than those who went and were involved in the Vietnam-Indochina War. As a result, I came with what I would call "baggage." I was at first perceived not as the guy who tried to negotiate things, but as the one who had been in Vietnam with the U.S. military and had been U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia in the closing days of the war. People did not pay much attention to my successful efforts in Laos to find a negotiated solution. I thought that I should try to explain to the newspapers and young people what was our position in Indochina, and why we did the things we did in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. In order to do this effectively, my wife and I took, every single morning Danish lessons from 8:00 to 9:00 at our home. Then I went to the office. I read Danish quite well, and spoke Danish outside the office as much as possible. I visited various universities in Denmark to debate with students subjects of interest to them. To the extent I could, I spoke in Danish. When I felt my Danish was not good enough, I switched to English. Since the young Danes spoke very good English, there was no problem of communication. I felt it was important to explain the position of all parties to the conflict. I tried to explain our position to those who were demonstrating against us, the young people, why we did it, and tried to make them understand our position. I said that I was willing to come and talk and discuss all subjects with the Danish public. This openness and willingness to discuss even sensitive subjects were rather well seen by the Danes. Sure, I sometimes encountered Danes who accused me of being a "warrior..." I met these criticisms by discussing the various different views on a subject and admitted that sometimes I had myself differences with the government's policies. I was trying to explain why we were doing things and the responsibilities of a major nation like the United States, which might be different from smaller countries with no major global responsibilities. I used Danish extensively, even more so because the Danish Prime Minister at the time was a very likeable labor leader by the name of Anker Jorgensen. Anker Jorgensen did not speak much English at the time. So, if I wanted to have a conversation on a sensitive subject, without the presence of an interpreter, I had to speak Danish. The Prime Minister and I went on two working visits to the United States. I would like to believe that I was able to convey most any thoughts in Danish - perhaps faulty, but fluent enough to be understood.

It is important to remember that Denmark has a very close emotional relationship with the United States. Denmark was at one point not always rich. The Scandinavians (Norwegians, Swedes, Finns, and Danes) came in droves to the United States before the First World War and settled in many parts of the Middle West. Whole cities in the U.S. came under Danish influence. The Danes in Denmark frequently had relatives in the States. Basically, there was absolutely no doubt that Danes liked Americans. They may have had differences with our policies in some areas, as for example with the U.S. Government policy in Indochina, but they basically liked us. This helped to make this posting a very pleasant experience. I would like to believe that I enjoyed a good relationship with all the Ministers of the Danish Government. Most of them thought that it was very sporting of me to try to speak Danish. I even went on television speaking Danish. I tried to convey, as U.S. Ambassador to a small country, that despite the difference in size and role, we wanted to work together in the mutual interest of our countries.

My job in Denmark was made easier by the atmosphere of detente that prevailed at that time. I was not known as a cold warrior. While evacuating Cambodia, I had authorized taking the Tass correspondent, a Soviet citizen, out with us. My Soviet counterpart in Denmark was a former minister or deputy minister of industry in the Soviet Union. (I was going to meet up with him again in South Asia.) When I called on all my diplomatic colleagues, I naturally also called on the Soviet Ambassador. On one of our meetings, he said: "We should do things publicly together. For example, let's do a sport together." At the time, ping pong was an activity used to establish a link with continental China. It was called "ping pong diplomacy." I asked my Soviet colleague: "Do you play ping pong?" "No, I don't play ping pong." "Do you play tennis?" "No, I don't play tennis." "What do you do?" He replied that he rode a bicycle. "Well, let's both go cycling together to show that we are at least civil to each other." So we went cycling together in a velodrome and in a public park. Newspapers and picture magazines took photographs of the two ambassadors riding side by side on a bicycle. It reflected for the public an atmosphere of detente. In reality, Denmark was strategically located to keep track of Soviet shipping. Knowing what was going on with the Soviet fleet operating in northern Europe remained important for our military. Even in time of detente, it was important to know what other major powers were doing or planning. Certainly, potential adversaries or competitors were doing the same with movements by U.S. shipping. Ever since the end of World War II, everybody was keeping track of the whereabouts and plans of submarines, and Denmark and the rest of Scandinavia were in an excellent geographic location to do just that. But the spirit of detente clearly made it easier for Western countries and communist countries to interact in Scandinavia where the public opposed hard cold war confrontations.

While in Denmark, I tried to increase the number of business ventures and trade between Denmark and the United States. When the Queen of Denmark came on an official trip to the United States, she took a number of key Danish businessmen with her. This gave me an opportunity to introduce a number of top Danes to the President of the United States. Among them was Maersk McKinley Moeller, the owner of the world's largest navigation company, who had also entered the petroleum business. He owned at the time the Danish sector of the North Sea oil fields. The mother of Mr. Maersk Moeller was American, and during the Second World War the huge A.P. Moeller fleet had sailed exclusively for the Allies. More than a million tons of the A.P. Moeller fleet had been sunk on behalf of the Allied cause by the Germans. It was probably the greatest single contribution of Denmark to the Allied war effort. Both in shipping and in oil/gas exploration around the world, this enlightened, pro-American industrial tycoon remained close to the U.S. until today. I am proud to have known this outstanding personality who exemplifies the strong linkage between Denmark and the United States.

Another example of my assisting business ventures between Denmark and the U.S. was the establishment of a factory by the Danish pharmaceutical company NOVO in North Carolina. The owner of that company, Mr. Hallas-Moeller, was looking around where to place the new plant and, after listening to many offers from different U.S. states, decided on North Carolina because of the factory's links to the University. Since then, NOVO has more than 30 plants around the world and is also listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Perhaps the most important strategic issue I had to deal with during my tour of duty was the stationing of NATO missiles in Denmark and areas controlled by Denmark.

Since a socialist government was in power during my tenure, I spent time on explaining the United States' position on many issues, including the principle of stationing missiles on Danish soil. This subject was a very important issue at the time. The Secretary of State followed personally this issue. The Danes worked closely with us and we succeeded to find a solution of mutual satisfaction to this problem.

One small incident that occurred during my tenure was the Danish celebration of our 4th of July. Every year, the Danes celebrate our National Day at Rebild, a park in Denmark, to honor the U.S. where so many Danes have made a home for themselves since the beginning of the 20th century. In 1976, America's bicentennial, the Queen herself attended this event. Unfortunately, it was one year after the Vietnam War and some young people, dressed as Indians, staged a large anti-American demonstration on that day. The Queen did a magnificent job, speaking to the crowd, to calm the unruly youngsters and to stress the positive elements of U.S.-Danish relations. I also spoke in Danish, thanking Her Majesty for attending this bicentennial meeting, and perhaps my effort to express myself in Danish also helped to calm the demonstrators. The event got a lot of coverage in the press. It was at a time when young people in many countries showed their differences with United States Government policies in the developing world.

In the same year, 1976, I accompanied Her Majesty and the Consort on their official visit to the United States, on the occasion of the 200th Anniversary of the United States. It was one of the most pleasant duties you can imagine. I accompanied Her Majesty to many places and represented the President outside of Washington. One of those occasions was the U.S. Denmark sailing race which took place along the coast of Connecticut. I am a notoriously bad sailor. I get seasick. It was a large sailboat with nine people on board. The skipper of the boat was none other than Prince Henrik, the husband of the Queen. I was on board just for baggage, I think. He came in second out of 300 sailboats, which was a very good showing. At one point, I prayed: "Lord, if I don't get seasick, when I get back on land I am going to show you my gratitude." I did not get seasick. The Danes made me a member of the Copenhagen Royal Yacht Club. I showed my gratitude to them.

I should make a little digression here. When I presented credentials to Her Majesty Queen Margrethe, with her husband Prince Henrik in attendance, my wife was waiting outside until the end of the brief ceremony. Then, the wife of the ambassador is asked to join the royal couple in a glass of champagne. The Prince consort, Prince Henrik, is a Frenchman. My French-born wife happens to know the family quite well. As a result, my relationship with the Queen and her husband was perhaps a little more personal than with some other ambassadors. Quite often, we were invited to play bridge with the royal couple in a relaxed setting. We also saw them both during vacation time at Prince Henrik's estate in southwestern France, which is located very near to where my wife's family hails from. When Prince Henrik's parents came to Denmark we were usually invited to keep them company. This cordial and relaxed relationship with the court also helped in solving issues which might arise

between the two countries. It also promoted our business links. When I went with Her Majesty the Queen to the United States on the occasion of our Bicentennial (1976), the Danish delegation included prominent Danish business people. I had the opportunity to introduce some of them to the President of the United States. Some significant joint ventures were started as a result of this visit.

Q: The Carter administration came in. Were there any difficulties with the Danes and the Carter approach to things?

DEAN: No. The Danes had a socialist government and the socialists also wanted to have a mutually beneficial relationship with the United States. The geographic location of Denmark makes the Danes look in different directions for their political, economic, military, and cultural ties. Denmark is part of the European continent. Denmark is also part of Scandinavia. Denmark's trade is largely with Germany. Politically, the Danes are comfortable with the British. Many family ties are with America. Militarily, Denmark is a member of NATO. The Danes are geographically near Eastern Europe. Regardless of the political orientation of the Danish government, the Danes are part of the Western world and have a social conscience for the needs of the developing world. The change of administration in the United States had no real impact on American-Danish relations. We worked together with the Danes just as before on subjects of mutual interest. In the people to people relationship, the Carter administration made a special effort. For example, President Carter's mother came to Denmark on a visit. As a former Peace Corps volunteer to Denmark, her return to Denmark was a big hit. My tenure coincided with an effort to overcome a period when the Vietnam experience had made some Scandinavians uneasy about U.S. policies. We, in turn, put our best foot forward, stressing cultural cooperation, as for example Fulbright scholarships, exchange of ballet companies, people to people exchanges, starting joint ventures, etc. I am still grateful today to the Danes for their outgoing attitude toward me. One of my last memories of Denmark is an hour-long Television program in which I was interviewed in Danish, and I tried to explain - in Danish - U.S. actions and policies. For my wife and me, Denmark was a happy posting.

Q: What about during this 1975-1978 period the NATO connection with Denmark? I was always told that Denmark was almost a stone's throw from East Germany at the time, and really did not have much of an army. Was there a significant neutralist government within Denmark?

DEAN: No. I think membership in NATO was important to the Danes. The U.S. Embassy had a close working relationship with the Danish army. During my tenure, the U.S. Secretary of Defense came to Denmark and we attended together a joint U.S.-Danish military exercise under the umbrella of NATO. Our navy to navy links were important. The U.S. air force worked with their Danish counterparts, especially on radar installations in Greenland. In short, Denmark was at that time an active participant in NATO. But, as you pointed out, the relationship of five million people to 250 million people makes for an uneven relationship. The most powerful nation in the world is also an easy target for criticism, and in that respect, Denmark is no exception. It is this gap - difference - I tried to bridge by learning to speak Danish, a language spoken by less than 10 million people. It reflected my approach to Denmark, its government and people.

In conclusion, I would say that for U.S. diplomacy, Denmark is not a difficult country. We are working with friends and our historic relationship with Denmark has been of a “family” nature. Furthermore, I was posted in Denmark only 20 years after the end of World War II. And the German occupation of Denmark and the Danish resistance to the Nazis were still fresh in people's minds. On the other hand, the United States had emerged from World War II as the great defender and champion of democracy and freedom, two values of major importance to the Danish people. The timing of my posting to Copenhagen (1975-1978) was particularly propitious to a mutually beneficial and friendly relationship between these two countries. It also made the work of the American Ambassador to Denmark much easier than my previous posting - Cambodia - and my next assignment as U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, a country struggling to maintain its identity, sovereignty, and independence.

MILDRED A. PATTERSON
Rotation Officer
Copenhagen (1976-1978)

Mildred A. Patterson was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and entered the Foreign Service in 1976. Her postings abroad included Copenhagen, Brussels and Ankara. Ms. Patterson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2003.

Q: You were in Copenhagen from '76 to?

PATTERSON: '78. To December of 1978.

Q: Who was the ambassador when you were there?

PATTERSON: John Gunther Dean was the first ambassador and then he was succeeded by a political appointee whose name was Walter Manschel.

Q: Well, now did you have any contact with John Gunther Dean?

PATTERSON: All the time. Copenhagen was a small embassy. There were only three junior officers. A junior admin officer and another vice consul. We attended the country team meetings because all of the officers did. He was quite an active, energetic and intimidating ambassador. I invited him and Mrs. Dean to dinner once and it was the hardest dinner party I've ever given, because I was so nervous, but it worked out fine and all of my guests seemed to enjoy themselves that evening. All dinner parties since have been easier than that one.

Q: I've interviewed John Gunther Dean

PATTERSON: Have you?

Q: But he's a name to conjure within the Foreign Service. He's bigger than life size. He needs a country at war. The thought of him sitting in Copenhagen.

PATTERSON: He had a hard time staying busy. He took Danish everyday. He made a very big point of the importance of knowing the language. He wanted everybody in his mission to speak Danish. I did not get language training before going to Denmark. The very first thing he told me in the first country team meeting was that I needed to get a Danish boyfriend immediately so that I would learn the language! Ambassador Dean traveled all over that country. He was in the newspaper constantly. He was quite a first ambassador to encounter. Once I joined the political section, he took me with him occasionally to meetings at the foreign ministry for me to learn to take notes. He had very strong views on how all of us officers should conduct ourselves at his receptions and especially at the Fourth of July reception. We had strict instructions about taking people away from the receiving line after they had greeted the Deans and about making sure that no foreigner was standing by him or herself. As you said, he was a figure who was larger than life. I grew quite fond of him.

Q: Yes, he was one of a sort of our imperial ambassadors.

PATTERSON: Very much so.

Q: But unlike so many of them, people who worked under him appreciated it. I mean he was not dismissive of people at least that's what I get. Well, maybe, okay, I appreciate your.

PATTERSON: He was good to us junior officers. He was very dismissive of his DCM and very tough with the military attachés. If you stood up to him he backed off, but if you were cowed, he went after you further. I stayed in contact with Ambassador Dean after they left Denmark, though I haven't seen him now in some years.

Q: Well, he went from there to Lebanon, didn't he I think where it was?

PATTERSON: He went from there to Lebanon, yes.

Q: Yes, which was in the middle of a war.

PATTERSON: Right.

Q: Civil war, which is where he belonged.

PATTERSON: He was in his element.

Q: How did you find Denmark as a first post?

PATTERSON: Denmark was hard financially as a first post because it was then one of the most expensive places in the world. I was making \$11,780 and that was at Foreign Service Grade Eight, step two. I had been given a step increase because I had gotten off language probation with my French, which gave me an extra \$500 a year. I had to borrow money from my parents

actually in order to make it those first two years. I had a charming apartment on one of the Danish canals in an area called Nyhavn, which is one of the famous streets just down from the Royal Theater. I think the apartment measured only 1,000 square feet. I didn't have a car. Luckily, the secretaries in the embassy befriended me and took me with them on some short week-end trips so that I saw a little bit of Denmark thanks to them. To get to work I either walked or took a bus. The Danes were not all that interested in meeting foreigners.

Q: This was, there's a reputation for really not being that friendly of a country.

PATTERSON: The FSNs were wonderful. I think embassies attract FSNs who are interested in foreigners or maybe just Americans, but a number of the FSNs were foreigners married to Danes and so I got to meet some Danes through them. In the end, outside of the Danish staff at the Embassy, most of the people I knew were other foreigners in Denmark. My downstairs neighbor in my apartment was an American who continues to live there, a photographer; he works for SAS and other airline companies taking pictures of airplanes all over the world.

Q: Weren't you assigned a Danish boyfriend?

PATTERSON: I wasn't! I was on my own on that score. To learn the language, I went to a wonderful language program. This was a program that was originally modeled on a language program that taught American soldiers during and after the Marshall Plan the language of the country wherever they were assigned. The system was based on learning full sentences in the language from the very beginning. You started with short ones and worked into long patterns and learned how to substitute different words in the sentence structure. It was extremely effective. My fellow classmates were mostly refugees in Denmark. There were Vietnamese refugees and Polish refugees and I remember being in a class with a number of them as well as with a couple of Russian diplomats, who always made me a little nervous, because I didn't like their personal questions. The learning environment was a funny combination of very structured, competitive classes requiring a tremendous amount of memorization yet taught by a very nice group of leftist Danish hippies. The system worked very well for me and by the end of nine months I really could speak Danish. It was a three hour session three times a week kind of commitment, and basically I did nothing else for those first nine months in Copenhagen, but I did come out speaking the language. When I tested at FSI after my tour, I got a 4/4 in Danish, which pleased me as you can imagine.

Q: What sort of work were you doing?

PATTERSON: I was a consular officer for the first year that I was there, then for about five months I was in the political section, and for the last six months I was the assistant cultural attaché.

Q: Consular work. What sort of work were you doing in Denmark?

PATTERSON: Visa interviews, both non-immigrant visas and immigrant visas. All of the FSNs in the consular section had started in the consular section many years before I was born, so that there was no teaching them anything, they taught me. There was a fair amount of interesting

passport and citizenship work. We had a number of American soldiers stationed in Germany who would come to Denmark to marry their German girlfriends, because it was easier in Denmark to get married. We had some American prisoners to visit, and a lot of Norwegian sailors to interview. They would fly from Tromsø to join a ship in Copenhagen and, usually drunk, would stagger into the consular section to apply for their visas for the United States. We did the full range of consular work.

Q: Was there having to refuse a good number of visas or not?

PATTERSON: The refusal percentage was very low, very low. There were a fair number of good old fashioned Danish communists that we'd either refuse or get a waiver for and some cases of moral turpitude, elderly felons who, years later, having led upright lives, would want to visit the U.S.

Q: Many immigrant visas?

PATTERSON: Oh, I think probably a case a day, so that would have left us in the 250 or so range annually.

Q: What were they mainly, were these mainly wives of Americans?

PATTERSON: A mix of wives of American or Danish businessmen and families going to the United States who either had been working already for multinational companies or who were going to start their companies. There were also some Vietnamese applicants joining families in the United States.

Q: In the political section, what sort of work were you doing?

PATTERSON: Well, I was the junior of the section, but it was an interesting period because it was the first time Denmark had the presidency of the then European Council of the European Community. The political counselor was Charlie Rushing. There was a lot of reporting to do simply because the Danes were chairing many committees and meetings.

Q: How did your writing skills I mean Foreign Service wise go? Did this help polish those?

PATTERSON: I had to learn the Foreign Service style, to write shorter sentences and to write a summary. You always needed a summary. I needed to learn that kind of skill, but they didn't edit much of the flow of the report. I can remember some funny discussions when the Political Counselor and I were trying to do a think piece after the Danish chairmanship was over, an analysis about Denmark in the future. I can remember writing about Danish cooperation with the Nordic countries and discussing basic issues such as trade, fishing, and shipping. The DCM, who was a lovely economic officer named Jim White, questioned my term "bread and butter issues". He kept asking, "What exactly does that mean?" I can remember several conversations when Charlie Rushing and I were pressed to be more specific and precise. It was very good experience.

Q: You know, from your lofty post as a junior officer in a political section, but how did they look upon Denmark? I mean Denmark sorts of sits there as a thumb on Europe. Was it sort of in step with the rest of Europe or was it sort of looking I mean were its interests different do you think?

PATTERSON: Denmark was the most connected to Europe of any of the Nordic countries at that time. It was in more of the institutions. It felt possibly the need of the NATO umbrella more and was just generally interested in playing a role in those institutions. The Danes will constantly tell you that Denmark is a very small country, and they take pride in that and yet wish it were bigger all at the same time. They were constantly trying to expand their role, but not as an individual player, always within the NATO context, within the EC context, within the OECD context.

Q: Did you get any feel about Danish German relations? I mean they've had their problems.

PATTERSON: On an individual level, the Danes at that time didn't particularly like the Germans. They hated it that the Germans called their city Copenhagen with a long "ah" sound like the Danny Kaye song and not Copenhagen with a long "a" as in "ache". The Danes on the street could be quite cool to German tourists. The official bilateral relationship was quite correct, however.

The Danes were not shy about criticizing the United States. They would hold up to us at any point Vietnam and Chile. Any time we were with younger people, we were asked why we had overthrown the Chilean government. The Danes, like other Scandinavians, had a sort of arrogant view of the rightness of their policies as opposed to those of the corrupted, power-wielding Americans.

Q: How did you feel about well Vietnam was sort of over, but this was still in the midst of the aftermath of?

PATTERSON: They were constantly throwing Vietnam at us. And what was also going on in Europe was the controversy over the neutron bomb.

Q: Yes.

PATTERSON: So, we were constantly talking about that.

Q: The capitalist weapon.

PATTERSON: Right.

Q: Destroy people and not property.

PATTERSON: And not property, right.

Q: How did you feel about the, what were you picking up from Dean and others about the Carter administration because this was more, it was a different type of administration than most. The emphasis on human rights and trying to look for an opening in the Soviet Union and all. I mean

did you find that, how did the ambassador and others, did you have the feeling there was a problem getting the right fit there with them?

PATTERSON: I don't think I did. John Gunther Dean was a big believer in human rights. I think he saw himself, because of his history in Cambodia, as having been on the right side of the people. Charlie Rushing, the Political Counselor, had served in what was then Rhodesia, later Zimbabwe, as had a number of the other officers in the embassy. They were pleased to support the human rights agenda and I don't think they thought it was too prominent. In Denmark it was easy, like pushing on an open door. I was so new to diplomatic discourse that I think I just probably failed to pick up nuances.

MILES S. PENDLETON, JR.
Political Officer, NATO
Brussels, Belgium (1976-1979)

Miles S. Pendleton, Jr. was born in New Jersey in 1939. He graduated from Yale University in 1961 and received his MPA from Harvard University in 1967. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1967, his postings included Burundi, Tel Aviv, Brussels and Paris. Mr. Pendleton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: What about countries such as Sweden, neutral but very much feeling the Soviet menace, you might say? Were we making periodic gestures, or were there loose ties with Sweden?

PENDLETON: In the NATO context, Sweden was pretty peripheral. Our ambassador to Stockholm came down and visited and spoke to permreps [permanent representatives] and discussed Sweden, but the way Sweden fit into the process, I think, is really quite interesting. It fit into the NATO process through Denmark and Norway, and so did Finland, because in particular, Denmark tended to be the "spokes-country" for all the Nordics. Iceland had its own representation at NATO although we provided the Icelandic armed forces. And so if Sweden had a NATO-related concern, it would make its concerns known to Norway and Denmark (and Iceland, I assume), and they would be factored into the process through those NATO members who were closest to Sweden. Was Sweden a major preoccupation? No, but you got some funny things.

One of the institutional things about the EU, then the EC, which struck me most was the day when in '78 there was a discussion in the North Atlantic Council about expanding the Committee on Disarmament (CD) at the United Nations. There was talk about expanding it, which all of the Nordic countries were behind (for domestic political reasons (with considerable vigor. So who would be on the expanded group representing NATO? That had to be decided at NATO. And I remember a debate that went on all morning, where understandably but unpredictably both Norway and Denmark wanted to be a member of the expanded CD. Usually they would work out such an issue between themselves in advance. We broke for lunch, and it was clear that Denmark and Norway were squabbling in public. At lunchtime the permreps went to an EC lunch, where

the issue was raised (although it should never have been), and it was, I gather, voted on, although the EC isn't supposed to vote. Ireland (a non-NATO country) tipped the balance. And they went for Denmark, probably because Norway wasn't a member of the EC. When lunch was over, they went back to the meeting at NATO and suddenly announced that they'd like to have a decision on who it should be, and it went to Denmark, with the countries which in the morning had been unwilling to commit suddenly coming out for Denmark. It was one of the first times that I suddenly realized what the EC could do inside the NATO body, and a bell went off in my head, and I said to myself, "Well, let's watch this for the future."

ARTHUR H. HUGHES
Deputy Chief of Mission
Copenhagen (1980-1983)

Ambassador Hughes was born in Nebraska and attended the University of Nebraska in 1961. He entered the Foreign Service in 1965 and served in Germany, Venezuela, Denmark, The Netherlands, Israel, and Yemen. In addition, he held several posts within the State Department

HUGHES: Went to Denmark.

Q: As?

HUGHES: As DCM.

Q: Deputy Chief of Mission, and this was 1980. Who was the Ambassador then?

HUGHES: Warren Manchione.

Q: He was a Carter appointee?

HUGHES: He was a Carter appointee. His connection was Senator Frank Church.

Q: Senator Frank Church. He was not from Idaho?

HUGHES: No, he was from New York City, and he was also a co-founder of Foreign Policy magazine, a periodical, along with what's his name from Harvard - Classic Civilization.

Q: Sam Huntington.

HUGHES: Sam Huntington.

Q: And he probably didn't stay very long? You say he got the message that he had to leave in two or three weeks, and you called back.

HUGHES: He got a very terse message.

Q: At the beginning of the Reagan Administration.

HUGHES: I had told him what was going to happen, and I told him what the routine was, what the drill was, but when the message came, it was even more terse than I had thought it would be and also the time period even shorter than I thought. I had been in the EUR front office during the last transition. I remember personally changing and editing a message that went out to Bill Macomber in Turkey, knowing of his antecedence, his feeling about the service and so forth and his long service in the Department for the country. Even then, though, I heard that he was very unhappy when he got the message, but I thought I had actually made it very nice.

Q: Probably better than it was originally.

HUGHES: But just a word about Juan Manshow. He was a serious guy, worked hard, was a good representative of the United States, but he made one mistake from which he never fully recovered from Washington's point of view, and that was after the NATO decision on modernization of intermediate nuclear forces. The Danish Prime Minister, Anker Joergensen, expressed some very serious reservations, and Manshow in discussion with him implied that maybe there were some compromises that could be made. Of course, Washington answered that they were wrong signals then to Anker Joergensen. So Manshow never fully recovered in Washington from that, although, as I said, he was a serious man, he was a hard-working man.

Q: Was he in Denmark during most of the Carter years?

HUGHES: Yes.

Q: Had you met him? Did he interview you before you became his DCM?

HUGHES: No. My intermediary, the person who asked me was Peter Tile, who was Executive Secretary of the Department then and had known Juan Manshow earlier. I don't remember the exact connection, where it came from. He was from New York City, of course, also. Might have been - well, I don't know, so I won't speculate. But Peter called me one day and said, "I'm looking for a DCM, and Manshow is skeptical about all the people that the system was proposing, and you're friends," and asked me for a recommendation and said, "How would you like to go do it?" So I did. I should say something here too which I considered a great big deal and disappointment and that is I found when I got there that Manshow was not being well served by the career staff of the mission for one reason or another, and it might have been a self protection and a reaction when he first got there. The basic attitude was obsequiousness, and nobody was giving him the hard advice that was necessary. I mentioned an example earlier on when they were reporting his dinner parties, and not substantive conversations that might have occurred at his dinner parties about issues of interest or importance, but like table decorations. It was just awful. At the first dinner party after I got there, the normal person without any instruction cranked out a message that came up to me as DCM. I took it in to him and I suggested that this is not what Washington is really interested in.

Q: Doesn't help them understand Denmark?

HUGHES: He understood immediately. But that's the first time thought I was earning my pay as a DCM.

Q: The staff was doing their job professionally but not really serving him and giving him good advice?

HUGHES: Again, when he got there, he was rather skittish - new system, new life for him. Wasn't sure in whom he could place confidence. He had rejected proposals for DCMs from the Department and taken an individual and put him back in DCM who was not well suited. He was a good professional in his particular specialty, very good.

Q: This was before you were there?

HUGHES: But he personally wasn't particularly suited to be a DCM. It was clear that the [message] from Washington was misplaced to some extent, because he simply wasn't getting good advice from the people who should have been giving him good advice. The main issues were two: IMF [International Monetary Fund] modernization and U.S. access to the Common Market, fighting all the common agriculture policy in particular, the old perennial tax.

Q: Not so much a bilateral issue between the U.S. and Denmark but Denmark as a member by then of the European Community, and trying to get them to take into account our views and our interests.

HUGHES: Also a lot of public affairs, trying to gain broader Danish understanding of American defense policy, national security policy. Actually we and the Danes were not much at odds on the common agriculture policy [CAP], because Danish agricultural interests and ours were to a large extent parallel. The CAP was basically a policy that would help the least efficient producers, whereas the Danes were among the most efficient producers. They were making contributions into the CAP.

Q: And not getting very much out of it.

HUGHES: No. They had a net outflow of resources because of the CAP. But there was a lot of public work with just a lot of anti-skepticism. Of course, President Reagan came in and the majority political attitude in Denmark was very negative regarding President Reagan.

Q: In which way?

HUGHES: Regarding his national security approaches, his cold, hard line, so there was a lot of work to do with respect not only in public affairs, media, editors, but a lot of work with respect to the political institutions and the government, which was labor.

Q: Whom did President Reagan send as ambassador?

HUGHES: Well, we had six months between ambassadors, and then he nominated John Loeb, who came out in September.

Q: Of '81. He kept you on?

HUGHES: I stayed my full three years.

Q: Was that an issue, that you were seen as the DCM for the predecessor?

HUGHES: No, he was quite content. In fact, he called me sort of after he was nominated and said he would like me to stay on. I said, "Thank you for asking."

Q: His background was in business, I guess.

HUGHES: Yes, his family was brokerage investment bankers. There used to be two Lobe brokers, two different Lobe families actually. His grandfather was born in Frankfurt and immigrated here through Saint Louis. I think it was [an American metal firm] that he worked for, a very, very capable guy, and that owned the company or most of it.

Q: Was it hard for you, having worked for Manshow and then being chargé for six months, to kind of get in step with him from the beginning, or did that work pretty smoothly?

HUGHES: Oh, I think that worked pretty smoothly. I was under no illusions what my function in life was supposed to be. It was fun being DCM, fun being chargé, but I'd been overseas in embassies before and, as I said, I was under no illusions who was ambassador.

Q: The priority areas pretty much continued, the two that you mentioned?

HUGHES: INF and BC.

Q: Access.

HUGHES: There was probably more emphasis on the whole defense policies, INF modernization, NATO, security issues because of the- (end of tape)

Q: I think we've been particularly talking about the latter part of that period during the Reagan Administration and its more robust defense policy, as you said. Things were happening in Poland and certainly in the Soviet Union not far from Denmark. To what extent did the embassy in Copenhagen get involved either in travel or observing what was going in your near neighborhood?

HUGHES: Well, not so much there, but the Danes were very nervous, because their perspective or their perception on a majority basis was that the Administration was being overly confrontational and that war was going to end up being blown up. They saw what was happening in Poland too and believed that that would add to a situation getting out of control and being even a greater likelihood of conflict. They, I think, to a certain extent were relieved - I was

relieved - when the Polish army carried out the coup against the Polish government, the Polish Communist Party, because it diffused the issue. It was unclear at the time. I remember talking with Danny Sawyer in Washington about what the prospect was for amelioration of human rights and political systems in Poland as a result of that. It was really unclear. One thing that I found interesting in the Danish context, so it's analytically inconsistent but very understandable in psychological and human terms: on the one hand the Danes were loud in protesting the lack of human rights and due process and democracy in some parts of the world. We were being criticized all the time for Central American policy - and rightfully so in many cases - and at the same time they were afraid of any attempts to liberalize, in Poland afraid that that would blow things up. So I used to talk with my Danish friends about this contradiction, which I said analytically was one thing, psychologically it's another.

One thing that interestingly enough was a big assist to us in this whole situation was Soviet submarine penetration into the Stockholm archipelago, and when the news of this hit the Swedish and international press, the Danes seemed to adjust their thinking and reassess somewhat what was going on. Who was the provocateur? What was going on? Who was being confrontational? What possible benefit was it to the Soviet Union or use to the Soviet Union? Was it to provoke Sweden? I think that there was a greater understanding that the situation was more complex and more complicated than many Danish observers or politicians or citizens liked to believe. Now, there were many Danes who were from our perspective very clear minded about the situation as well. But there was a need for an awful lot of work in public affairs and editors, politicians. I made some very good Danish friends and have wonderful memories of many of our discussions, in some of which I ended up disagreeing on politics but not in human terms and many we agreed on a basic outline.

Q: They were afraid in the case of Poland that the Soviets would intervene there.

HUGHES: They were afraid of intervention and then fighting, and then what do you do? Look what happened in September 1939. What about refugee flow? Would they be trying a pursuit? And, of course, as a Danish island right off of Poland, would there be refugees coming, and then what would the rules of engagement be by the Danish Coast Guard in case there was pursuit by the Polish or Soviet vessels and aircraft? These all were real questions or potentially real questions, and they were worked through. And then, what about NATO as an institution? There was a NATO command of the Baltic forces in Denmark.

Q: With U.S. personnel stationed there?

HUGHES: Well, in the headquarters, but there were no troops there, no foreign troops in Denmark in peacetime. Exercises, yes, and some staff. The commander of combat practice was first rate, first rate.

Q: Danish?

HUGHES: Danish two-star general, first-rate general, first-rate guy.

Q: Okay, what else should we say about your time in Denmark? Great country.

HUGHES: Yes, in human terms it was great. There was a tradition of celebrating the Fourth of July over in Jutland - Danish Americans, Americans, Danes, a day in the countryside, a celebration. The first year I was there I was chargé d'affaires.

Q: Did a visitor from the United States usually come for that?

HUGHES: That year it was Pat and Shirley Boone, who turned out to be really a very decent guy and a guy who got in the spirit of things and would do what was right under the circumstances, ask for advice from the Danish hosts. It was funny, his image. I remember when I was growing up, I enjoyed some of his popular songs, but never thought much about that. His image was kind of a goody two-shoes, but one of the things you do in Denmark is drink Schnapps Aquavit among other things. At the celebration you would eat herring, marinated herring, and drink Aquavit, and you sing the Schnapps song. And here's Pat Boone sitting and eating herring, drinking Schnapps, chasing it with beer, singing the Schnapps song. So it goes, "The hell with your juice and teas. Schnapps is the drink for me." And then the next year we had, from the New York City Opera...

Q: Joan Sutherland.

HUGHES: No, a soprano. Maybe her name will come back to me. She also, of course, was quite good. She didn't prepare her remarks very assiduously unfortunately. And the third year we had Vice President George Bush. That was the first opportunity I had to meet him and to meet Mrs. Bush, a wonderful person, so gracious. I remember NSC staff was with the Vice President, and Rick Burry, our Assistant Secretary. So Rick brought it to me and said, "Here's the speech that's been written for the Vice President. Read it and tell me what you think." So I read the speech and I said to Rick, "You know, there are two things here. One thing, it's too defensive in tone, I think. I know as well as you that the problems with respect to Danes and this part of the world we are too defensive. You don't want to put the Vice President of the United States in a defensive tone or defensive posture." And then I said, "And there's another part that I really wonder if it's relevant for here. You're talking about southern flank or something" - I don't remember what it was - "and this is Denmark. Are you sure he doesn't want to talk to [the person in charge]?" But I really wanted to say it was too detailed. It was kind of like the reaction would be "huh?" Well, Rick hadn't told me beforehand, but he had written the speech. So he said, "Well, okay, let's go down and talk to the Vice President." So we went down, and Rick said, "Mr. Vice President, here's the DCM you met before. He's got some comments about this draft." And so I told him, and he said, "Yes, I see your point on this. It is a little defensive. I shouldn't be taking that tone. Would you rewrite that part?" But he said, "On this other point I want to make the point." I said, "Well, Mr. Vice President..." He said, "No, thank you. I want to make the point. I'm going to make the point." I said, "Okay, fine." So then I took the speech back and just rewrote a little bit and did some editing. That was the first time I ever met with...

Q: So he made the second point even though you weren't sure...

HUGHES: Well, I take it back. I met him once when he was Ambassador to the U.N. and did come down to say hello to Bill Macomber, and I was in the office and we chatted for a few

minutes. Well, I should in all fairness say a little something about the Ambassador. He did not have a successful tour. He wasn't well prepared for it. He tended to see his role as a kind of a spokesman, a kind of a presenter. But he didn't prepare himself either before or as he went along adequately to be able to explain policies or articulate policies. He was not a great reader. We would read them orally, I and all the other people in the embassy would read them orally; but, for example, he really found it difficult even to read the President's speeches, which would at least have given him or brought out the things we're talking about. His personal life was very controversial too. He had a number of relationships that became a bit notorious in the Danish press. The Danes are very open-minded, but they're also monogamous. So he had a difficult time. It was not successful.

Q: Was he still there when you left in '83?

HUGHES: I was being transferred to become DCM in The Hague with another officer. But we had the Vice President coming, and both the Ambassador and Washington thought it would be useful if I were there during that visit, so I took early home leave, came back to the States, and then went back for the Vice President's trip.

Q: Which was around the Fourth of July?

HUGHES: Yes. And then shortly thereafter, a Sunday morning, my wife and I threw our luggage in the car and drove to The Hague. That's a very civilized way to have a transfer. I recommend it highly.

TERENCE A. TODMAN
Ambassador
Denmark (1983-1989)

Ambassador Terence A. Todman was born in 1926 and raised in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. He attended the Polytechnic Institute of Puerto Rico and served in the U.S. Army. Ambassador Todman received a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University. His Foreign Service career included positions in Tunisia, Togo, Chad, Guinea, Costa Rica, Spain, Denmark, and Argentina. He was interviewed by Michael Krenn on June 13, 1995.

Q: OK. At the end of your time in Spain you were assigned to Denmark in 1983. I sent you a copy of an article from the New York Times which was talking about some of the very heavy criticism of the Reagan administration, especially early on, about its non-use of black personnel in the Foreign Service, its misuse and so forth. And your case, in that article, was specifically cited, that, well, "Here's a perfect example. A career Foreign Service Officer being sent from a class-one embassy--Spain, to a class-three embassy--Denmark." First, I want to ask you, in general, do you think those criticisms of the Reagan Administration were warranted. And secondly, let's go particularly to your case with the assignment to Denmark and what you thought about that.

TODMAN: I don't think the Reagan Administration thought about, you know, I don't think they paid much attention to, "Are we going to be sending blacks?" There's a certain number that will be taken care of, and, OK, you do that. I don't think it was a particular issue with them. And in my case, I asked for Denmark. So, people have the idea of one embassy or another. It's really what's happening in those places. I had a choice of a couple of embassies at that time, and I must say Judge Clark was fantastic. He was in over at the NSC. He called me up. It was time for me to go from Spain. Basically I had done what I needed to do. I had introduced the two administrations. I had accompanied the King of Spain on a visit. I had accompanied the Prime Minister, Felipe Gonzalez, on a visit, a lovely meeting with Reagan that went very, very well. The two sides had been introduced, I had been there a long time, it was time to go. There were a couple of people who were ready for assignment and for whom Spain was the appropriate place. There were three of them, actually, sitting in the wings. As a matter of fact, before Tom Enders came out, which, as you remember, happened very suddenly, somebody else came up. I received a call saying that this person who is coming on a visit is going to be your successor, so show him around, and introduce him, not as the next ambassador. And I actually went through that. Then I got another name, so I had two names, one of whom I was told by Clark, "this is going to be it". And, my God, I'm over in Italy at a meeting with Admiral Crowe, talking about major things, and there I get a call saying, "Oh, Tom Enders is coming, can you arrange to get it done right away?" Well, I knew I was going, but the circumstances were rather amusing.

Before that, before I knew who was coming in or anything, Clark spoke to me and offered me a couple of places, and I said, "Denmark." Denmark, a member of NATO, really very important. But I had sentimental reasons. I'm from a former Danish island. I'd been exposed to things Danish before, and the thrill of being able to be the American ambassador in the country which used to formally own my island was something which was just great. Also, Denmark, I knew from Spain and the NATO connection, was extremely important to us. Denmark with its EC connections and its leadership role extremely important. Really, although Denmark is a small country, its voice isn't at all small. It is heard in councils because it has the courage to speak up. And Denmark, in terms of social organization and so on represented something. And so for me, and Denmark wasn't formerly available for career appointees at all. So a chance to go to Denmark was one that I just...I decided that I wanted to go there. I had to go from Spain; I knew that. The people who talk about, you know, class-one posts, whatever they mean by that... Where was I going? You mean I had to be sent to Paris, or to Bonn, or to London? You know, that's crazy. And the people who talk about that don't have a realistic sense of how the business works. It's what's available at the moment, who is pressing, and there are some posts that are not available for career people. So you look at the gamut and you say what it is you want. No, it was a choice. It was not be any means a putdown and not regarded so by me.

Q: Once again, you arrived in Denmark, as you seemed to arrive in a lot of your countries, at sort of a critical point. Denmark had given sort of a slap in the fact to NATO, I guess the year before you got there--the Parliament vote to not contribute to the deployment of new missiles in Western Europe for NATO forces. So that's when you came in there, and obviously that was probably one of your first goals is to try and get Denmark back on the NATO bandwagon. Was it a serious problem that you found in Denmark?

TODMAN: It was a very serious problem. In fact, I just found a clipping which was interesting, because in an opinion poll taken shortly after I got there, the headline was "Better red than dead." A majority of Danes said they'd rather be occupied by the Soviet Union than caught up in a nuclear war. The Danes, you know, are a great peace-loving people; no desire to get caught up in these things. There were many people who liked that NATO umbrella, but who felt that there was an aggressiveness and that maybe an accommodation with the Soviet Union would be better. And in any case, they didn't want to have their country exposed to risk. So a lot of what I had to do in Denmark was to talk about burden sharing. Denmark became known, to the dismay of the serious people, as the "footnote country." Because whenever there was a communiqué saying that NATO was going to do anything, there would be a footnote: "Denmark takes exception to that"; "Minus Denmark." So there was a lot of getting...not the government, because the government was quite supportive...but leaders of the Social Democratic Party, which had a major influence on the opinions outside, to accept that there's a certain price that you pay for your security. And as I said, not from the government, because the government was really quite good about it. But it was an uphill battle to try to get some of this turned around.

Q: Was anti-Americanism a component of this anti-NATO sentiment, or was that completely...?

TODMAN: Not particularly, although there was some, I don't know, my predecessor had some feeling that there was anti-Americanism. There was a book, a picture book, put out there with pictures of some of the really unpleasant sites of the United States: *Amerikanske Billeder* by Jacob Holt, I think it is.

Q: Right, right, he visited one of the universities I was at to give a slide show.

TODMAN: OK, he had pictures of blacks, minorities in general, poverty, slum areas, and this was interpreted as anti-American. I never saw it as such. I regretted, obviously, anything that focused on just one aspect of our country and presented that as being what the country was like. But there wasn't very much of that. There was some feeling of our being very aggressive and hard-charging, and sometimes we were. But, the ties were really great. Denmark has held and still holds the largest Fourth of July celebration anywhere in the world. And it is only for July Fourth--it has no other meaning for the Danes, except July Fourth. And they get up to 25,000 people traveling to the northern part of the country, near Aalborg, and celebrating the Fourth of July with speeches, and demonstrations, and everything. The royal family participates in it. The Queen has, many times. The prime minister, the government participates, people from all over, just to celebrate the American Fourth of July. You don't get that in a country that's anti-American. Twenty-five thousand people gathering in the hills, eating hot dogs and singing U.S. songs and making speeches. They bring over an American speaker and then they have a Danish speaker, and the only thing they talk about are the great, warm ties between our countries. No, I find it was good. There are the people who are opposed, of course. And there are different aspects of what we do that people are not in favor of. But anti-Americanism, no. The business of not spending a lot for defense, yes. You know, not contributing. That was not something they were not too much for.

Q: In terms of trying to convince them, as you said, the Danish people, in distinction to the Danish government, how good a job do you think you did while you were there in terms of trying to get this message out to the Danish people?

TODMAN: I think reasonably well, frankly. I think we did well. Denmark remembers having been occupied and knows that the United States had been involved in supporting the resistance movement, when it got going. One of the touching things that happened this last Memorial Day was to see the Danes come over, the Defense Minister, the Chief of the Armed Forces, a delegation headed by the Crown Prince, who put up a memorial in Arlington Cemetery in honor of the American airmen who lost their lives flying over Denmark, dropping supplies or whatever. And interestingly enough it's a Social Democratic government now, so these are the same people who were against the cooperation. So changes, changes have occurred.

There was one incident that was unpleasant. We had a nuclear policy of "neither confirm nor deny"--NCND--policy as to whether any ship is nuclear powered. The Social Democrats tried to force a vote on the issue because of our ships visiting. And I told them, very frankly, that if they don't respect the NCND policy we just couldn't visit; we really could have nothing to do with them. Because we couldn't change a critical world-wide policy just to satisfy the Danes. That got to a real crisis on account of the opposition. And the government decided it would have to call elections on the issue, which turned out well for the government. But I think we were successful in getting them to understand that they had to carry, have to carry, some responsibility; they have to bear some of the burden for their defense. It's never going to be, you know, a total success, because there is this feeling that they'd rather use the money for other things, and they'd rather accommodate, they'd rather live well. Some of that goes through a fair proportion of the population.

Q: With Denmark, too, you had a question of U.S. bases, but not in Denmark, in Greenland. Were you facing the same kinds of problems there that you had faced in dealing with Spain? Of course, the bases were already there.

TODMAN: Yeah, the bases were already there. But the bases were already there in Spain also.

Q: Yeah.

TODMAN: In Spain as in Denmark. In Spain, they were more critical at that time, because we were continuing to fly in that area. Some serious mistakes were made through insistence of Defense. But we did manage to get the agreement, so, OK, we were able to do that. We failed to do something that would have been very, very helpful to us, because people just thought we could get away with anything, and we couldn't. But in the case of Greenland the base issue was less critical; it was critical during war for ferrying over, obviously, because of that North Atlantic stop. But it was more a question of how much was Greenland going to be compensated. Again, we get parsimonious on some things. I remember one colonel who had to come over to Denmark several times to negotiate an agreement, saying that the money we were talking about...he shook the coins in his pocket...was "pocket change". Yet there were things we weren't prepared to do. And the Greenlanders got to the point where they were saying, "Look, you're using a hell of a lot of our territory. We need everything. You should be able to make some kind of contribution."

We finally did get it resolved. The issue was what to do with the mess that was around there; cleaning up; what was going to be shipped back to the States. We would prefer the easier way of just burying it right there, but with what consequences later. It was a different kind of issue. It wasn't negotiating on whether we could use the base, or the bases, because we had two of them, Sondrestrom and Thule. It was more what were we willing to do to help the Greenlanders. Whereas in Spain, it was actually base rights and respect for the Spanish authority and sovereignty, of giving them the proper right for the control of their territory. There were issues like that that were involved, and it was far more critical because we needed them for practice of all kinds, including practice in bombing, target practice, landing practice, very, very active kind of activities in Spain.

Q: You were in Europe a good amount of time, which leads me to this question. Here in the United States, of course, we were told that the Europeans during the Reagan Administration, the prevalent view of the Europeans seemed to be that here was this crazy cowboy in the White House. There, there you are on the scene: what were the general European opinions of Reagan?

TODMAN: The idea of the movie actor was one that spread all over, and yet the Europeans respected Reagan as someone with strength and determination. So, that there was sometimes not liking what he might do but feeling that he had the will and strength to go ahead and do it. He was very supportive on security issues. You could count on anything that meant military security, his being there to help, and that made a difference too. So, it was a mixed one on him as a person and so on. People neglected, and somehow the story never came out, of the man having been a two-term governor of California, a state that's bigger than many of the countries, has an economy, has more complex things, so not somebody who had just come to this thing recently, but who had run things and was really, really very able in that respect. So, on a personal level the liking was not there, but at the same time, there was a lot of respect for the strength, and the courage, and the willingness of the man to go ahead and do what needed to be done and of his strong support for military security.

THEODORE E. RUSSELL
Deputy Chief of Mission
Copenhagen (1984-1987)

Ambassador Theodore E. Russell was born in India in 1936 and raised in the United States and Italy. He attended Yale University and Fletcher School. Ambassador Russell's Foreign Service career included postings in Naples, Prague, Trieste, Rome, Copenhagen and an ambassadorship in Slovakia. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in February, 2000.

Q: Before we move on to relations with Denmark and all that, let's talk a bit about the Embassy. I mean Denmark, Copenhagen is considered a nice place but were you sort of overcrowded with agencies or they tended to be in Brussels or Paris or London or something like that.

RUSSELL: I don't think we were overcrowded with agencies, although it's true some wanted to come there. Ambassador Todman was very good about saying no, and could make it stick. I think the problem was that although we were a small embassy, we were an embassy to an EC country, a NATO country and a pleasant European country everyone wanted to visit during Congressional breaks. So we were a small Embassy but extremely busy. For example, we received generally the same multiple distribution or collective cables as Paris, London, and Bonn. If they got a message saying go in and talk to your host government and make the following pitch, we'd get the same thing in Copenhagen even if it really didn't concern Denmark very much. We had a tiny operational staff basically and were overstretched. Also, the Danish Foreign Ministry was not that large and we came to the point that the Danes came to us and said "Look, you are constantly coming to us to make a demarche on Friday evenings and weekends. This is nonsense. We don't pay any attention to it unless it is really an emergency. Stop it." So we finally had to urge Washington to cut down on the amount of demarche cables like that which the Danes were ignoring unless the issue was really important. A lot of suggested demarches coming in from various agencies weren't particularly relevant to Denmark, but were being sent to every EC or NATO post. We literally just faxed the minor ones over to the MFA and gave a call and said "Would you read that when you have a chance. Let us know what you think." We were absolutely swamped. Our tiny political and economic sections would typically be asked to make two or three demarches a day to the Foreign Ministry on different issues. We simply didn't have the staff to prepare diplomatic notes and personally deliver them all and do all our other work and the Danes didn't have the time or inclination to receive us constantly. However, anything important we handled very fast and professionally and the Danes responded the same way.

Q: Looking at this, sometimes it is interesting to be in a place such as you were watching this, and you weren't part of the "Big picture". What was your impression? Was this a real dialogue or was this an awful lot of people in Washington blowing off steam or something like that?

RUSSELL: There was the normal administrative problem of the small post with just as many requests for action as a larger post. So that was unrealistic because Denmark was a smaller player in a lot of these issues. It was not so useful to go in to the Danes with a demarche when the real problem and real players were the French or the Italians. Aside from that, I thought we had a pretty focused foreign policy approach because we had a series of major trade issues with the EC as well as major security issues with Denmark and Greenland. Denmark depends on trade, they live on trade. Even though they have a government that provides cradle to grave security, they are not statist like the French and are very entrepreneurial. I think when we were there it was one of the first times in decades that they had a conservative government in power. However, it depended heavily on the opposition not raising too much trouble. This was a situation where Denmark was very much a free trading country and therefore was a natural ally on some of these trade issues with the EC. So we had some very substantive things where we would go to the Danes and say, "Look, this particular EC position, like taxing U.S. exports of fats and oils or restricting our soybean exports into the EC, is really going to hurt our trading relations with Europe. We hope you will not support this. We hope you will speak out against this." And the Danes in some cases would help form a blocking vote against the offending EC proposal. Typically we found that the Danes and Dutch and Brits for example had a more free trade attitude on a whole series of U.S.-EC trade issues. So we had a generally good relationship on economic issues. On defense issues, the Danes were not very good within NATO in the sense

that they did not spend much on defense. They had a small military establishment hampered by all kinds of labor rules. Their navy would go out on patrol off of Greenland and come back and have weeks off in compensatory time. On weekends they would be in port. They were not very strong on defense issues. In addition to that and more serious than that, the Social Democrats were very wishy-washy and unhelpful on the whole NATO approach towards the Soviets and were constantly putting in footnotes in NATO. We were constantly lobbying the Danish government and Parliamentarians to urge they avoid doing that.

Q: Could you explain what a footnote meant.

RUSSELL: NATO works by consensus. NATO would take a position on how to respond to Soviet aggressive moves and the Danes would put in something saying that Denmark disassociates itself from this position. It would be just a little note saying Denmark demurs. They wouldn't block it, but they would demure. That was extremely dangerous from our perspective because we were trying to answer the SS-20 threat. The Soviets had put in these SS-20 missiles, and we came up with the cruise missiles and the Pershings, extremely effective as it turned out, counter to that. But there was enormous pressure which the Soviets were helping to stir up in Europe against the American missiles coming in despite the fact the Soviets had put in their missiles first. There were also issues such as low Danish defense spending and the whole complex of issues involving maintaining and upgrading our bases in Greenland, including the early warning radar at Thule, and making the Greenlandic population feel they got something out of the presence of these bases. This was a series of defense issues that we raised with the Danes. On the plus side, the Danes were really the cork in the bottle in the Baltic. They played a very important role in terms of being able to monitor Soviet submarines coming in and out and stopping that very quickly in case of conflict. So we had a wide ranging defense debate with the Danes, and we were constantly talking with them, and their very effective diplomats. Although their military was small, it had some very good officers, so our military attaches had an important dialogue with them.

Q: Well, I would have thought on this NATO thing that it would be difficult to keep from having almost contempt for this Danish thing of almost essentially getting a free ride and able to posture on something that you know, had the Soviets moved in, they would be squashed like a flea. Was it hard sort of to keep a balance to counter, sort of smile and say well the Danes are this way or something?

RUSSELL: It was a problem. Now we were dealing with a conservative led government, the government of Paul Schlüter. The people who were doing NATO affairs, the people in the Danish defense establishment worked very hard to get a pro NATO approach, to keep Denmark in line pretty much with NATO policies. But as I say the Social Democrats, who traditionally ruled Denmark, by far the largest party, had a very Euro-leftist attitude on a lot of these things. The party had a right wing and a left wing and some were more helpful than others, but it was a real problem. Our assessment was that if it came to war, Denmark would be overrun very quickly. If I remember correctly, it was mainly a Polish force that was going to move right in. The Soviets were extremely active in Denmark trying to stir up anti-NATO feeling. They were very active and aggressive on various intelligence and diplomatic activities trying to make Denmark into as weak a partner as possible within NATO. One of the things we ran into, which of course was

pretty annoying, was the Danish left's characterization of Denmark as "caught between the superpowers" as if they were not a NATO partner and as if the U.S. and NATO were not defending them against the Warsaw Pact and deterring a war that would destroy them. I don't mean the Communists; they had a hard line Communist Party, but the pro-Marxist left in the Social Democratic party who were rather anti-U.S. and fearful of doing anything to offend the Soviets. I think frankly it is also a matter of the fact that Denmark is a very small, flat country. So in case of war, they would have been very quickly overrun. Opportunistic politicians could make a popular case that they might as well give up the idea of self defense. They had a non-Marxist party that actually proposed a defense policy of one person in the Danish military at the end of the phone who would say "I surrender," if anyone called and made a threat. That party got 15 or 20% of the vote.

Q: Well, was there any appreciation of what Soviet rule could mean?

RUSSELL: I think there was. As I say they had a conservative government. Obviously there were a number of voters in Denmark who thought the Soviet system was fairly rotten. There were many moderate Social Democrats who were very opposed to the Soviet system. Even the left wing Social Democrats, unless they were actually corrupted in some fashion, didn't want the Soviet system in Denmark. They just thought that Denmark should not risk offending the Soviets and take any risk of getting trampled. I think that was part of it. Danes have a very strong sense that they are a small group of people and need to stick together and preserve themselves as Danes. They didn't want to get wiped out in a superpower conflict. On the other hand the point we would make is we fully understand your concern, but you are less likely to get wiped out if NATO sticks together and therefore prevents the Soviets from trying anything. That was our argument, which I think was the correct one. So I think there was some very fuzzy thinking going on, particularly on the left side of the political spectrum. But I think there were a lot of Danes who understood the situation very clearly.

Q: Was there any spillover from Sweden, which maintained a neutral stance. What were the Swedish-Danish ties?

RUSSELL: There is the Nordic cooperation process that is well known and works pretty well. It is a matter of "we are all Nordics in this together Norwegians, Danes and Swedes and even Finns and we have got to stick together." They did do this diplomatically in many situations, as in the UN. But within that Nordic grouping there is a lot of competitive feeling and history of who did what to whom like when Sweden won back southern Sweden from Danish rule in the 17th century. Also there are revealing jokes. Many Danish jokes portray the Swedes as humorless, hard drinking people. "As drunk as a Swede" is what a Dane might say. The Swedes might say as "drunk as a Finn". It is that kind of thing. Frankly the Swedes in many ways had a tougher position on defense than the Danes. The Swedes spent a lot of money on defense. The Soviets often sent over mini subs into their waters and probed their defenses in other ways. I think in case of war Sweden would have inclined to the NATO side.

Q: How about the Norwegians during this time? Norwegians were opting out of the European Community.

RUSSELL: Because of their oil. However, the Norwegians were extremely solid in NATO, very serious. They were a country that was very exposed, but they are not flat. They fought well in WWII, and they would have fought well in the event of a conflict with the Soviets. They had a border with the Soviet Union and they took a strong posture although they were certainly not provocative. They had a somewhat different attitude than the Danes, probably based on geography as well as history.

Q: How did you find Danish society? You know just living there and making diplomatic contacts and that sort of thing?

RUSSELL: Denmark was an extremely pleasant and easy place to operate as a U.S. diplomat in that you had excellent access to the Danish government. It was a conservative government, but even if it had been a social democratic government we would have had good entree because of the important defense and economic relationships. So we had excellent access to excellent people. They had a superb diplomatic corps. If you went in and said this is our position on some NATO issue and you explained your position they would say, "Well our position is a little bit different but we can support you up to this point." And they would do it. So you could go back to the Embassy, write a telegram saying the Danes will support us on this but they won't support us on that, and they would deliver. The Danes are very friendly to foreigners, although I think the Danes feel that they know the way to live, and others haven't quite gotten there. Others need to be told where they have fallen down. On the other hand, partly because of their trading relations, they are very open to foreigners. They are basically a delightful people and have a good sense of humor. However, they are sharp negotiators. When we approached the Danes with a demarche, we made a big effort to have a convincing rationale and solid talking points. Sometimes whoever was writing these talking points back in Washington would give us boiler plate material crafted for a whole range of countries.

Q: Well, talk about talking points. You get something you are supposed to go in and here are your talking points. Was it the practice to say these are lousy talking points, let's make our own?

RUSSELL: We would and particularly so with Terry Todman as Ambassador. He didn't take any nonsense from anyone. We had more leeway I think in dealing with Washington than any Embassy I've seen. Yes, we simply would not use poorly done talking points. We would adapt the position and try to make it more relevant and convincing.

Q: Looking at the time, '83-'87, this was of course, Ronald Reagan. I would have thought particularly in the early days that with a country like Denmark, a Ronald Reagan as president would have made them early on at least uncomfortable. I mean is this a cowboy you know, because Ronald Reagan had quite a record of making speeches that could make you feel uncomfortable later on. How did you deal with this? How did this work in Denmark?

RUSSELL: Well I think that is right. I think many Danes were worried that Ronald Reagan was going to intensify the Cold War and thus bring them into heightened danger. They did think he was extreme. They believed a lot of the stuff in the U.S. and the European press saying that the guy was a cowboy. But I think that little by little, people found we had a pretty solid approach to dealing with the Soviets and with NATO. However, they certainly didn't always agree with us

and there was a lot of visceral anti-American feeling on the left. There was suspicion of Reagan in Denmark, but also in Europe generally. Remember the Le Canard Enchaîné cartoon?

Q: A French humor magazine.

RUSSELL: During the 1980 election campaign with Carter and Reagan, they had a cartoon showing cutaways of Carter's head and Reagan's which they said allowed you to tell the difference between the two candidates. Reagan's head was empty and Carter's had a peanut in it.

Q: How about relations at that point with Germany?

RUSSELL: I remember there were a lot of problems in terms of getting our missiles into Germany and Italy and some other countries. I remember there were a lot of demonstrations in Germany, as there were in England. However, I don't remember in detail a lot of this history. Certainly the big issues were about NATO defense and U.S.-EC trade problems.

Q: I was wondering just about the attitude of Danes towards Germans.

RUSSELL: The Danes were not particularly hostile towards Germans. They had laws mainly aimed at Germans but applying to all foreigners against buying up their beach properties for example. If they didn't have a law like that they wouldn't have a coast, nothing but German summerhouses ringing Denmark. So they are aware that Germany is big, rich and next-door, but I think they find them a good trading partner. The Danes, because they are a trading people, try and get along with pretty much everyone.

Q: Talking about the European community, were we showing concerns at the time that the European community might become a bit too enclosed, you know to exclude all products and that sort of thing? Were we looking to Denmark as somebody sitting inside to work for us?

RUSSELL: We had for years looked at the EC from the point of view that some of the things they were doing, like their Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which is so heavily subsidized, discriminates against U.S. farm exports. We looked askance at a lot of EC protectionist agricultural policies. We always concluded that, despite these trade problems, European integration was very much in our interests. We did approach the EC Commission and also national governments trying to make our case. If a national government had a more free trade stance on something and was less wedded to the CAP, we would certainly also approach them bilaterally. We didn't do it with a view of splitting the EC. There was no thought the EC was bad and we ought to try to split them or weaken them. But if there was a particular issue that involved potentially a free trade versus protectionist approach on something, we would approach countries bilaterally as well. But we certainly didn't see Denmark as a U.S. instrument in the EC. We saw them as a natural free trader, which they were.

Q: I have talked to people who served like Ed Rowell who was Ambassador to Luxembourg who was saying that he found Luxembourg being a small country they were rather delighted to be able to tell what was going on in the European community in its various forms, where it would be more difficult to get something like that out of Bonn or France or something like that. Did you

find that you could use Denmark as a good window onto the inner workings of the European community?

RUSSELL: This goes back to how we were getting that kind of information in the European Bureau. Of course we were getting reports from all the various embassies. We tried to put it all together. We had excellent cooperation from the Danes when they were in the EC Presidency and got good readouts on how EC Council discussions had come out. However, they were careful about not giving us details on internal disagreements

Q: Were there any trade issues that sprang up or airline issues or fishing issues or anything of that nature that particularly came up while you were there?

RUSSELL: We did have a number of trade issues, as I've mentioned, on things like EC proposed restrictions on U.S. soybeans and a tax on fats and oils imported into the EC. We worked closely with the Danes on these issues and got some good support. There were also some fishing issues as I recall. I remember there was an issue within the EC about Greenland and Greenland fishing rights. The Danes, who are super negotiators, managed to get Greenland all kinds of exclusive fishing rights off their shores.

Q: What about relations with Iceland? I was wondering how that was working at this time?

RUSSELL: Denmark and the other Scandinavian countries tended to stick together. They were all very solicitous of Iceland. I don't remember any Icelandic issues ever surfacing except fish. That has always been an issue. I remember there was a serious Iceland-UK row about fishing rights in the 1970s.

Q: Well the cod wars.

RUSSELL: The cod wars, yes.

Q: Remember they were bumping each other's ships. It wasn't friendly.

RUSSELL: Yes. But I don't remember much involving Iceland coming up while I was in Denmark. Greenland, of course was a big issue. Thule, our phased array early warning radar station, was very important to us. The Soviets challenged that its capabilities exceeded those allowed by the ABM treaty. It could allegedly be used to control missiles as well as detect missiles. We would have to argue that in Denmark and make the case to the Danish government that they were not hosting something which violated this treaty. We managed to successfully prevent any major campaigns starting on that issue. Then there was Sondrestrom, which was also the main civilian airbase in Greenland. There wasn't much pressure from anybody, including the Soviets, to get us out of Sondrestrom. At that point we were still interested in a chain of early warning stations going across the ice from Sondrestrom from east to west. Their technology was becoming passé and I think they were eventually just abandoned. But we, at that point were worried about anything that challenged them on environmental or treaty violation grounds. We had to be constantly safeguarding the position of our bases in Greenland and making the case that they were good for Denmark and also good for the Greenlanders. So I spent a fair amount of

my time looking at Greenland issues and trying to figure out ways where we could try and demonstrate to the Greenlanders that the U.S. presence was beneficial to them. They had home rule although they didn't control foreign and defense policy. If the Inuit population for some reason had concluded that the U.S. bases threatened their interests that would have endangered our keeping the bases open. So we got an initiative going working with the Dane who was special representative to the home rule government. He was very bright, a great big bear of a guy with a full black beard, a really impressive, interesting individual. But anyway we worked with him on what can we do to show the Inuits that the American presence helps them economically. Now it turned out that the Inuit hunters had basically killed off the northern musk ox herd in Greenland. This was a key source of meat and hides. We came up with the idea of flying baby musk oxen from the southern herd to replenish the northern herd. I had to sell that to the U.S. Air Force Space Command. I finally did and we got a lot of favorable publicity out of it. The Air Force were not delighted at having a bunch of evil tempered, smelly, defecating musk ox messing up their airplanes, but finally agreed it was an inexpensive way to gain goodwill. I worked for many months as U.S. Chair of a Greenland working group that negotiated base reduction and reentry rights and a series of modest economic benefits for the Inuits that defused demands for greater U.S. payments and kept the Greenlanders favorable towards the U.S. presence.

Q: Musk oxen are goats basically.

RUSSELL: They are very unpleasant creatures, even the little ones. The Air Force was very good about it and flew them up there. We worked very closely with the Danish Foreign Ministry. A Danish Under Secretary for Economic Affairs chaired the Danish side of our Commission.

Q: How did the rule of Denmark in Greenland, I mean was it complete sort of home rule except for...

RUSSELL: It was home rule except for defense and foreign policy.

Q: How about subsidies? Were a lot of the subsidies...?

RUSSELL: They got a lot of subsidies. It was quite costly for Denmark to support.

Q: While we were looking at the economies there. Sweden was beginning to have trouble by this time I guess. I am not sure of the exact timing. But were they looking at the Danish social net and all and looking at how viable it was?

RUSSELL: We weren't looking at that issue in detail because we didn't have the staff. We had very small political and economic sections. We only had one really experienced economic officer and there were enough EC issues that he certainly didn't have time to go into that. But we watched with interest the situation where you did have a conservative government partly brought in because the Danes were rebelling a bit against the extreme form of welfare state that had been created. In Denmark the ideal situation to be in to take full advantage of the situation is to be very poor, work averse, ill and to have a large family. If you have to be in that miserable situation, then you ought to be in Denmark because they will take care of you. You have cradle

to grave security. If you quit your job or you are out of work you have a couple of years at a very high percentage of your full pay, then you get retraining and another crack at it. Then you can go back on welfare for a long period of time. If you are a natural born shirker, you can really do pretty well there. However, the Danes typically are hard working people in that they enjoy doing creative things, so you don't have a huge problem with turning into a nation of shirkers just because they could with the welfare system. But it is an extraordinarily expensive system. Their tax rates are very high. The conservatives came in partly because they promised to lower them a bit.

Denmark prospers because its people are very entrepreneurial and they work in a capitalist economy where workers then pay a very high tax rate to pay for social services. Some people make a great deal of money; they pay most of it back to the state. They are allowed to make money, the state doesn't try to regulate the economy, and it just taxes you once you have made the money. Denmark has very strong labor unions, all kinds of social protections and a socialized health care system. But it really didn't work all that well. I mean if you got cancer for example, you might not get operated on for a while because of the waiting list. It was similar I think to the British system or the Canadian system. So what you got was basically free medical care but you might have to wait quite awhile for it, or it might not be all that great when you got it, or if you were old you might be triaged. I came away thinking we don't want to go that route in the States. But I also came away thinking that we could do a lot better in terms of our safety net. Denmark until after WWII was not a wealthy country. These Skansen or outdoor museums you can visit in Denmark show how people lived in the 1800s and into the early part of the last century. A majority of the population apparently was living at a near subsistence level, often in stone floored farmhouses that were cold and damp. The country was not prosperous and there was a large class of people who lived very poorly. So when the Danish population got a chance, they voted for a cradle to grave security system based on the previous experience of poverty.

Q: Is there anything else we should cover there?

RUSSELL: I don't think so. As I say it was the pleasure working in a really well run embassy. We had a good team of people. Occasionally there would be some personnel problem as in any embassy, but by and large we had very good people, and they were very highly motivated. Everyone was busy, with a lot of interesting issues. I think our U.S. and Danish staff was proud to have an Ambassador who was highly respected. The Danes I think were extremely curious when an Afro-American came as Ambassador to Denmark. They didn't know how to take that. The Danish view of America was very much the European left wing stereotype of American racism and American blacks living in poverty. And here they saw a distinguished, successful Afro-American come as U.S. Ambassador. They themselves had a few problems with color that were shown as soon as immigrants started coming in from the Third World. A huge national scandal developed when it turned out that the Justice Minister had been popping people of color coming to Denmark as refugees back on the airplane without refugee processing and sending them back to Sri Lanka for example. But in terms of an American Ambassador, I think Danes found it fascinating, and Ambassador Todman handled it beautifully because he had been born the Virgin Islands.

Q: I was going to say he had a Danish tie.

RUSSELL: Denmark sold us the Virgin Islands in 1917. Ambassador Todman would say "But for a few years, I'd be a Dane," and the Danes thought that was great. He was very highly respected and liked there. His wife is delightful and she would have very successful cultural or even commercial events. They were very popular and well received.

Q: Well, I always hear about the Fourth of July in Denmark.

RUSSELL: At Rebild over on Jutland. Danish Americans would come over to a traditional Rebild Fourth of July celebration. Our Ambassador would always be there. He would go over and make a speech. The Queen would be there and the Foreign Minister. It was really a big deal. It generated lots of goodwill, good feelings for the U.S. in Denmark

Q: What was the role of the royal family in Denmark during this period?

RUSSELL: The royal family had an ideal position in Danish society I think, because the Queen is very much beloved and respected and is very low key and very much the queen of all the Danish people. For example, she would go shopping, you would see her walking down the shopping street and her chauffeur if she had a bag or something would carry it for her, but no protection, no secret service. She designs jewelry and supports all kinds of charities. Danes are extremely egalitarian. They have something called the law of Jante, which is, don't stick your head up and think you are any better than anyone else. I was told by some Danes that although they really didn't have programs for gifted kids in the schools, they had many programs for handicapped kids. This egalitarian streak makes even wealthy Danes make a great effort not to show off with fancy house facades or cars.

Q: Did you find there was much in the way of young people of college age going to the United States to get degrees in business administration or what have you?

RUSSELL: Yes. There were many Danish young people coming over to visit or study. The only serious visa problem we had in Denmark was the Au Pair problem because a number of them wanted to go as Au Pair and the visa numbers are severely limited. Sometimes, if they applied for a tourist visa, they would be grilled so much by the Consul on whether they really wanted to do Au Pair work they would complain. The children of more well off Danes would often go to U.S. colleges and we had Danish friends with kids at Harvard and other top schools.

PETER B. SWIERS
Deputy Chief of Mission
Copenhagen (1985-1987)

Peter Swiers was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from New York University and entered the Foreign Service in 1961. He served in Greece, Germany, the USSR, Malaysia, and Denmark. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1994.

Q: Then you went to Copenhagen. How did you get that job and what were you doing?

SWIERS: When my second year was up, I had to get back into the Department. There were no DCMships I could have applied for at the time, as I recall, but one of the jobs available was the political counselor position in Copenhagen. I had two promotion boards to go and the odds of getting promoted were rather slim. I called a fellow who'd I served in Moscow with, Marty Winning. Have you ever done something with him? He's here in Washington and is executive director of what used to be the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. Marty's had a rather fascinating career. He's one of those fellows who've had a very early promotion to what is known as FSO-MC now. He got promoted so early he ended up being retired out of the service early. He has some fascinating stories to tell you. Marty was director of northern European affairs, and I said: "Look. That job in Copenhagen is open, and I really would like that job. My wife and I have never lived in Denmark." We were in a very difficult period in our Nordic relationships at the time and I thought maybe I could do something. Marty spoke to John Kelly; as I learned a number of years later Rick Burt was out of town and they rushed my assignment through while Rick was away. I had no idea Rick had these strong feelings about me. I probably could never have gotten a DCMship in the EUR bureau. I will always be grateful to John Kelly and to Marty Winning for this. By the way, John Kelly now works for Rick.

Q: Where did, you were in Denmark from when to when?

SWIERS: I was in Denmark from the summer of '85 to the summer of '87 when I retired. Fascinating period.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

SWIERS: Terry Todman. One has heard all sorts of things about how tough he was, but he was one of the best people I had ever served under. He was very strict, he was fair, and he knew his subjects cold. The two of us just related beautifully. I really genuinely liked him.

Q: What were the issues that you were dealing with in Denmark from '85 to '87?

SWIERS: The principal issue was that INF was still being negotiated away. In 1982, the Danish Social Democrat party had in effect abdicated government because it was not prepared to undertake the austerity programs required in this Nordic country. It was a model for others. The social welfare state had not only reached but was exceeding its limits. The Swedes continued with their program and several years later had some very serious economic problems. The Social Democrats abandoned the domestic scene.

On the other hand they then had an issue which was foreign policy. There was a whole issue of nuclear weapons. With Helmut Schmidt's loss in Germany the moderate wing of the Social Democrat movement in Europe as a whole was weakened. Also there were generational changes. Those with a memory of the war were fading; the memory of the WWII and the Cold War were fading away. Some new groups were coming in and there were some sort of old-fashioned leftist

type socialists. They couldn't really argue the issue of the economy because they had abdicated their responsibility, but they could pick up on foreign policy.

The principal basis for their policy was that the United States had become the one that was continuing the east-west confrontation. It was a false issue, but it was a good political issue. We had a whole range of NATO questions, modernization questions. After all the Soviet Union was still the Soviet Union and it maintained certain aspects of Cold War policies. It was called the footnote policy where the Danish permanent representative to NATO had to be instructed by the Danish government that it wished to collapse, because the Social Democrats could produce a majority on foreign policy. It could not produce a majority on domestic policy and had to abstain from a given position or make a note of opposition to this particular policy. It was absolutely ridiculous. It was a real low point for Denmark.

Q: I must say, Denmark, we'll stick to the time there, Denmark...it's hard to think of Danish, I mean Denmark's no military power. That's at least, I mean from somebody who doesn't know which is me. I mean how were they considered?

SWIERS: Denmark isn't considered a military power, but it's geography is of incredible importance and this point was made over and over again. I don't think this document is going to get too deep into Danish domestic affairs, but...

Q: No.

SWIERS: There were the Social Liberals in Denmark who in domestic policy were liberal in the European sense of the word, which is essentially libertarian - very little government involvement. On the foreign side they represented the historic Danish pacifism and neutralism. They were probably more neutralist than pacifist. All of us in the embassy maintained that Denmark could not escape its foreign policy because it sat on the egress to and from the Baltic. There was no way it was going to escape whatever might happened. The moderate wing of the social Democrats plus some others understood that and they were not prepared to go through either with another conquest or an occupation. They thought they could sit out WWII. They could not, as they found out, and a lot of them talked about that. It changed them forever. There were some strong Social Democratic supporters of NATO. Denmark joined NATO under Social Democrats.

Secondly, a Danish possession - or what does one call a Danish dependency - the Faroe Islands, are located midway between Britain and Iceland. We had a major listening post, largely anti-submarine warfare listening post, but also air coverage on those islands. Rather humorously, as we would point out, there was always 200 Soviets present in the Faroes. They would bring a so-called "fishing trawlers;" they kept people on the island to help repair the trawler, so there were always 200 Soviets there. Everyone knew that their mission was to, as quickly as possible, go and take out that listening station if the conflict ever broke out.

The third issue was Thule in Greenland. Thule was one of the three principal American BMEWS (Ballistic Missile Early Warning System) radar stations. There was one in Alaska, one in Greenland, and one in northern England in Fylingdales. The geography was there and one way or another Denmark was not able to escape it. This station was a source of embarrassment to an

overwhelming majority of Danes, or to a plurality of Danes, but at the same time whenever an annual poll was taken of Danes on Danish membership in NATO, it was always about 70% or more in favor. You had real contradictions.

I think it was an abuse by the Social Democrats of their opposition role to keep themselves forward on foreign policy; it largely embarrassed their country. As political counselor I was assigned to deal with the opposition. The ambassador and the DCM largely dealt with the government. It was overlapping, but I largely dealt with it. The government had the ambassador; we worked with both sides, and Todman was absolutely first rate.

He would have the leaders of the parties, including the opposition parties, for private lunches just for one-on-one. It was a totally different type of conversation. Todman was an absolute master of the art of the diplomacy, which was even more amazing when you think of what that man probably went through earlier in his career. I can understand why he kept up a certain wall; there was something beyond which you did not go with Terry Todman. I understand it fully.

Q: When you had contacts with the Danish opposition, did you feel you were up against a party line or something?

SWIERS: No. In Scandinavia, there are largely homogenous societies, and the parameters of opinion are not really as wide. Even the extremists, the so-famous Progressive Party, stayed within bounds. Mogens Glistrup refused to pay his taxes, but that was acceptable as a protest. Then there were the communists who had been largely discredited over Hungary. There was another party called the Left Socialists, (Danish), who were the communists that broke away as a result of Hungary. They were still quite anti-American nevertheless. There was a malice element there. There was a wide spectrum of opinion because in the Danish parliament system a party only needed two percent of the vote to get into parliament.

In contrast, the Germans realized that to avoid Weimar Republic fiasco, it should be a minimum of five percent. The German federal republic would not be what it is if it had the system that existed in other European states. You needed five percent in Germany in order to be represented in parliament. I might note that's also what you needed to be represented in the Russian Duma, and that in part came out of a program the Atlantic Council held with the Sergei Valotov, Yeltsin's chief of staff.

But there were a lot of them who were committed in different ways. It's true that if you were a politician in a northern European parliamentary system, your point of view was defined at a certain vector along the spectrum of where your party lay in the political structure. Organizations such as the American embassy served in a way to bring these various people together. It was very rare that a Social Democrat met with a conservative except on the floor of the parliament. But if you brought them together in the U.S. embassy, you actually got the two of them to talk. It's quite striking really; quite different from our system.

Q: Was there much interest in Danish affairs back in Washington?

SWIERS: Yes. There are some very interesting things that went on in that period because the Danes were a unique member of NATO. The European community had not yet become the European Union, but the Danes were a member of the Nordic Council. They were very, very active in the U.N. and heavy participants in the U.N. peacekeeping operations. So while it was a very small country, the Danes had and probably still have a highly effective intelligence service.

I should note that since I was married to a Dane, I was lucky. But oddly enough, it's a very small country and in part because it is a small country and a sea-faring country, the Danes were highly cosmopolitan. Danish diplomats are exceedingly sophisticated and worldly.

I would like to return for a second to Thule. Where, as I said, we had a BMEW station, which was part of a line that could track Soviet missiles that may or may not be coming in our direction or in the direction of Europe. These radars had been placed I think sometime in the '50s and had not been modernized since then. In the meantime the Soviets had modernized their radars with a new system called "phased array." If somebody's very interested I'd be glad to go into the details of what it was, but it was the system needed to track large ballistic missiles. The Thule radar as I understood it couldn't be certain of the direction of the missile flight. Was the missile actually coming at you or was it going parallel to you? It was also hydraulic operated - just to give you a sense of why this thing needed to be updated. Obviously, the ABM treaty...

Q: ABM, Anti Ballistic Missiles treaty.

SWIERS: ABM had an ambiguity in it which could open to question whether we could upgrade the radar that was located in third countries. Now if you look at the map at the top of the world, the Soviet Union had an advantage because it could place all of its BMEWS radar within the Soviet Union. In our case we were highly dependent on our ability to site in Canada or in England and or in Greenland. We decided to modernize. At the same time the Reagan administration was talking about SDI, (Strategic Defense Initiative) - the anti ballistic missile defense system. The Danish left got quite excited about this. Some felt that modernizing the missile system would be a violation of the ABM treaty. Secondly, some felt that the Reagan administration was trying to make it into an extension of SDI, in other words ballistic missile defense, as opposed to a passive system.

If you understood ballistic missile defense systems there is no way that you would put your battle management radar at the periphery of the system. You would want to have it at the center looking out. But most people didn't understand the technicality. Secondly, it's very easy through what do we call "national methods" to determine whether a system is a passive defense radar for monitoring, or an active radar that could be used for actual battle management.

On the first issue, the clear point was that if we were going to deploy a strategic ballistic missile defense system (an SDI) that could be construed as a violation of the ABM treaty. That was independent of whether we had the right to modernize the Thule radar. I think it is clear when you read the language of the treaty that we did have that right; there was a proper grandfather clause. That is my interpretation. That was the interpretation of others. However, it was a real serious question because on the extreme left a party called the Left Socialists, which had broken off from the communists over the Hungarian revolution, were quite opposed to this.

I had gotten to know the then deputy chairman of the Danish Social Democratic party, Svend Auken. I spoke to him about it, and we arranged with USIA that he would go under the international visitor program to the United States. The program had to be cut down to two weeks, maybe even one week because he was required to be back in Denmark. There was an enormous fuss about it back in Washington because visitors are only supposed to go if they will stay a full four weeks. We also had a problem with the Department of the Air Force because they were worried about hosting a socialist. It was frankly a high-risk initiative.

I thought we should send him directly to the headquarters of the North American air defense system which is located in Colorado Springs. General Bob Herrings was then the commander there. Ambassador Terry Todman knew Herrings, and Todman wrote Herrings about it because we were encountering some resistance in the Air Force. Some people there, in my estimate, had difficulty distinguishing between socialist, communist, and social democrats. Auken in fact was U.S. educated in part. But we finally managed to get Auken out there.

He had not realized, and perhaps others are not aware of, that NORAD is a unified United States-Canadian command. This is quite striking. This goes beyond NATO; the way NATO would have joint commands, we function in NORAD as one country. That day Herrings had been summoned to Ottawa by the Canadian defense minister and couldn't host Auken personally. Instead Auken was hosted by the acting commander who was a Canadian. They showed him pretty much everything he needed to see and were quite open about the process and in answering his questions.

He told me later that he was astounded that we and the Canadians were totally integrating all the systems. He said frankly, I may be using a bit of an anachronism here, I don't think it was "blew his mind" but something equivalent of that. That here was the United States of America in effect putting its final defense in the hands of a foreigner. I said: "Well he's Canadian." "Yes, but he's a foreigner." He just thought this was quite remarkable. He said it affected him instantly; it was just happenstance that the Canadian general was hosting him because of Herrings absence. That was an extra we didn't anticipate.

Auken came back to Denmark and met in closed session with the foreign relations committee of the Danish parliament, and made basically four points. Number one, this system is vital not just to United States' defense but to NATO's defense as well. The NORAD system would be transferred to NATO through whatever defense mechanisms had to be set up if or when something happened.

Number two, he said that clearly this was not a battle management radar. Number three, if there some ambiguity in the ABM treaty about it, that was a matter between the United States and the Soviet Union. Denmark was an ally of the United States and until that issue was resolved, Denmark had to be with the United States. I must say that Mr. Auken, while he sometimes could be very irritating, stood firm even during the whole period of questioning United States' motivations. It was quite a courageous position for him to take.

The Danish government was a conservative liberal coalition, which always had a majority on domestic matters, but on foreign policy matters was dependent on the Social Democrats, and this is why they could hold the government hostage on various security issues. The government did a white paper on it and that was the end of the matter. We modernized the Thule and had it as in a "phased array" system. Fylingdales in England was already under construction and I think Clear in Alaska had already been modernized. I will tell you this was a vital security interest of the United States, and I will tell you I was very pleased by the position that Mr. Auken adapted.

He paid the price later when he was finally driven out by the left wing. He made a very foolish move in my view in the year after I left. The Danes are maybe the only foreign country that actually celebrates our Fourth of July. It's a tradition and the queen usually goes; high-ranking U.S. visitors come, and more often than not we send a U.S. navy ship in for a visit to the nearest port which was Aalborg.

Auken decided to challenge the ship visit because the Danes did not know whether it had nuclear weapons on board; that would have been a violation of the Danish posture. Our usual response to this is: "We neither confirm nor deny." That has been traditionally accepted and everybody knew that the odds of having anything on board were rather slim, but we just did not comment.

I have to say it was our government, and maybe it was Roz Ridgeway, the assistant secretary, very smartly did not take the lead on this issue but left it to the British because under NATO reinforcement plans for northern Europe it was actually British land forces that would be sent to Denmark.

The Brits have the same policy that we do on nuclear matters; so the British government informed the Danish government that if this issue was to be pursued then the British would have to reconsider their commitment to Danish defense. The Danish government was absolutely delighted because they finally had an issue on which they could bring to a vote. They had a skilled prime minister at the time, Paul Schlüter, he called for a vote because he said this was bringing Denmark's membership into NATO into question. Needless to say he had an overwhelming victory and that was the end of that. The Social Democrats dropped poor Mr. Auken as chairman, and the current prime minister of Denmark, Poul Nyrup succeeded him.

Q: You mentioned that the Danish Foreign Service was particularly well-informed. Could you give a little feeling for how they recruited and how it was put together as compared to some other foreign services?

SWIERS: Actually in a very traditional way. There is a Foreign Service exam. Even today it is still largely a male foreign service although they are making some serious efforts to change that. In fact I'm very proud that we had a young lady as an intern at the Atlantic Council - the Danish Atlantic Association traditionally sends an intern - who was actually brought into the Danish Foreign Service just after completion of her internship last year. They almost without exception are lawyers which is again much more a continental matter. The Danes are extremely well-educated people, and are simply very shrewd observers; almost without exception I've found that. On the one hand, they're an interesting country psychologically; they're almost schizophrenic. They're bound to the European mainland and you would therefore think that their mentality

would be continental as the Germans, for example, but they're actually more British in the sense of a global outlook. They are a sea power. I may have mentioned the story about the Maersk line and the support they gave us in the Gulf War. I guess probably not because it's not in this but, the Maersk line which you see in Baltimore.

Q: That's Maersk?

SWIERS: Maersk, Maersk McKinney Moeller - his father, A.P. Moeller founded the firm and his mother was American. That line is the third largest container shipping fleet in the world, and I believe it's the sixth largest shipping line. To get a sense of how worldly they are, the Danish East Asiatic Company, which is a major trading company around the world, has its own fleet and in fact functions like a foreign service the way it works.

So they have a very worldly outlook and I've always been impressed by that. At the same time, because they're a small country, they can sort of just get around. I've found them consistently well-informed on the countries where we both have representation; more often than not the Dane's observation on what is happening or what is about to happen was the accurate one. So I've found them extremely helpful and to this day I maintain that link.

RONALD D. FLACK
Deputy Chief of Mission
Copenhagen (1987-1990)

Ronald D. Flack was born in Minnesota in 1934. After receiving his bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota he served in the US Army from 1957-1960. His career has included positions in Athens, Manila, Abidjan, Paris, Algiers, Geneva, and Copenhagen. Mr. Flack was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 7, 1998.

Q: So, when you left, where did you go?

FLACK: As I was preparing to leave Geneva I was put up, unbeknownst to me, to be ambassador to Burkina-Faso and was told by people in AF and Personnel that I would be going. My wife has a limited medical clearance and can't go to malaria posts, and that is a malaria post. So, I called Hank Cohen, who was the deputy in personnel at that point, and said that I am very flattered but my wife can't go and I don't want to have a separation post and I would appreciate you finding me something else. Well, that was fine but they never came up with another chief of mission job so I looked for another DCMship. Copenhagen was available and I went up to see Terry Todman who was the ambassador there. We seemed to get along all right and I took the job. I went to Copenhagen in the late summer of 1987.

Q: You were in Copenhagen from when to when?

FLACK: From 1987-90, three years. Todman was there for another year and a half and then he left and a political appointee from the Bush administration came in, a very nice fellow. He was a real estate developer from Colorado by the name of Keith Brown. He and his wife were very nice people. He had been a political appointee to Lesotho. So, I was DCM to those two ambassadors in Copenhagen.

Q: In 1987 what was the situation in Denmark?

FLACK: First of all Copenhagen is a lovely posting and one of the more pleasant postings in the Foreign Service. As you could probably surmise we don't have major problems with Denmark. In the past we had had a certain number of problems with Denmark in the NATO context because up until a couple of years before I arrived, it was a socialist government that was constantly bickering over NATO issues. Denmark had the reputation of being the footnote country in NATO because whenever NATO agreed on something and the Danes didn't there would be a footnote at the bottom explaining that Denmark disagreed and would not participate. Then a conservative government came in before I arrived under Poul Schlüter and things began to change for the better from our point of view. We had a very comfortable and good relationship with the Danes under the Schlüter government. One of the major issues that I had when I was there was our wanting to close some of our bases in Greenland. Just as a note of reminder to everybody, Greenland is part of the Danish realm and even though it has a home rule government, foreign relations and security are handled by Copenhagen. We have had bases in Greenland, which have been considerable over the years - I think at one point we had 12,000 people at Thule, now there is a few hundred - and as things were changing a combination of politics and technology rendered a lot of these facilities redundant or unnecessary. So, we started negotiating about closing some of them down. It became a very difficult issue because it became almost a social issue. Imagine in Greenland, which is a huge area, with a population of 45,000, half Danes and half Greenlanders, and most of those are in the capital, Nuuk, and a couple of other settlements. The rest are in tiny little villages scattered around the coast. Some of these little villages are close to an American radar station, for example, that we were going to close down. It may be a tiny little place, but it is a building and has a generator and communications and with helicopters coming in from time to time there is a certain amount of connectivity. Because of that local communities, small as they might have been, developed and became dependent upon them for everything from having a doctor, a telephone, power, etc. The station was there and always willing to help. It would fly in a helicopter if somebody was sick, for example. Now we were going to take these away and that meant that these villages in some cases were simply going to disappear or drop back into the Stone Age. This was not an easy issue to resolve.

A related issue was on the ice cap in areas where we had had installations and facilities, the trash, not toxic waste, was basically just thrown out on the ice and eventually covered over with snow and ice. Everybody knew it was there and the Greenlanders began thinking that what they could do to help them out was to demand compensation for removing the waste that was up there. This was another negotiation. The negotiations were between the Department of Defense and the government of Greenland with the State Department and the Danish government very much involved. So, most of the negotiations were held in the ministry of foreign affairs in Copenhagen but some of them were done in Greenland and in Washington. After I left they signed an

agreement on this and I don't remember the details of the agreement, but there was compensation to the Greenlanders for the removal of American facilities. The base at Sondrestrom was turned over to the Greenlanders. Thule is still there but much less important. It is no longer a strategic air force base. There is still a very important radar installation up there which is important in early detection of missile lift offs in Russia.

One of the more interesting events of my tour in Denmark was in the summer of 1989, Keith Brown was ambassador and Queen Margrethe, who goes to Greenland from time to time, decided to make one of her periodic visits and visit Thule on July 4. Technically, from a protocol point of view Ambassador Brown should have gone but he didn't. He said he wanted to stay in Copenhagen for his first Fourth of July in country, which was a big deal for him. So, Daniele and I went with the Queen and Prince to Thule. We didn't travel with the Queen but went ahead so we could spend some time in Greenland. We stopped of in the capital for a visit and then went to Jakobshavn and on to Thule to be there when the Queen arrived.

She spent five days at Thule. Now Thule is a pretty isolated place with not much to do and you would wonder why she would spend that much time there. Well, first of all the Queen truly loves Greenland. She spends time there, knows the country and the people and is rather a remarkable person in that sense. There are several villages close by to Thule that depend on the base being there and she visited them, spending a whole day in each one. So, two days right there were spent in the villages. The bachelor quarters there do have a couple of VIP suites. My wife and I were in one and the Queen and Prince Henrik were right above us in very spartan VIP accommodations. We gave a dinner party for them at the Top of the World Club at Thule, the officers club up there, which is a rather pleasant, run of the mill American Air Force officers club. We did a first class job. The commanding general from Colorado Springs came out to be there with us because we were kind of co-hosting this visit. We put on an incredible dinner for the Queen's entourage of about 15 people and the VIPs from Greenland and the military. I think we had about 50 or 60 people for dinner. Special wine, flowers, and some food was all imported. It was really a wonderful occasion.

The Queen was appropriately impressed and so was Prince Henrik. Prince Henrik is French born and has a chateau in the middle part of France and grows his own wine. We had brought in some of his own wine, a good year, to surprise him. He was very pleased with this. I remember also, because the Queen was so knowledgeable on all these foods that we were serving, because it was local fish, I had to learn all about what was on the menu. She was sitting next to me and as we started eating the fish dish, and I commented on what lovely Arctic sole it was and she looked at her plate and then at me and said, "That is not Arctic sole." I said, "Oh, really? I was told that it was." She said, "No, no, this is such-and-such a fish. It is very close to what you said, but it isn't. However, don't worry about it."

The other thing about the Queen of Denmark is that she is a chain smoker and you have to know if you are going to be around her that you have to have a lighter or matches, because even during meals she smokes between courses. She has a particular brand of Egyptian cigarettes that she smokes, so you don't offer her one unless you have her brand. A lot of people who are around her in Denmark do carry her brand so that if they happen to be next to her and she is looking around,

she can get one of her cigarettes. We didn't have her cigarettes, but did have a lot of matches and lighters around.

She and her husband are very nice people. They are very easy to talk to. I must say there is an interesting difference here. She speaks excellent English but her English is formal and a bit stilted, so when you are speaking to her in English its formal and stilted but nevertheless very easy. However, the family language is French because her husband is French and they spend a lot of time in France. Her two sons are very francophone. Well, my wife and I speak fluent French and when we were with them I found that it was easier to switch to French. In French the royal couple are very different. They are much more relaxed, much more amusing, simply because they are more comfortable in it and it is their family language. So, basically, when Danielle and I were with Margrethe and Prince Henry it was in French and we had a good time with it.

Q: How did you find Terry Todman as ambassador?

FLACK: First of all he has a nickname, Terrible Terry, and before I went to Copenhagen several of my friends said not to go to work for Terrible Terry because he has the reputation of being very difficult to work for. He had been there for several years and I thought that was all right because I wouldn't be there with him long, I would get another ambassador. Well, it turned out that it was 18 months and I did have problems with Todman. Let me say first of all that Todman is probably one of the most highly competent and professional Foreign Service officers, if not THE most competent professional I have ever known. He is extremely able and wonderful with people. I found he was wonderful with the Danes. He is an extremely accomplished diplomat. The problem from my point of view was his management of the embassy and his interface with the American staff, which was virtually nil. He was a closed door ambassador. He wasn't the type of guy who says, "My door is open at all times." It was always closed and therefore we had communication problems. He didn't feel that I was communicating with him enough. I didn't feel that he was communicating with me or the staff enough. For example, he never, not once, came into my office. Now, that is his prerogative, of course. It was difficult and he did not appreciate me and the relationship kind of fell apart. Luckily for me, we were inspected. I say luckily because the inspectors saw what I called the deficiencies in the way he was interfacing with the staff and the reports were favorable to me, I think, and critical of him. Nevertheless, I am a very big admirer of Terry Todman as a professional and as a diplomat, he is extremely able.

Q: Was there any impact by the reunification of Germany, the falling a part of the Soviet Union and all? You were there when this was just beginning to happen.

FLACK: Yes, it was beginning to happen and it was felt very much in Denmark. Denmark, of course, is very close. It has a border with Germany and is close to East Germany and Poland and the Baltic. Denmark has traditionally had close relations with the Baltic countries and this was blossoming again as these countries were approaching independence. These were major political developments in Denmark and the population as a whole felt them. There are quite a few Germans in Denmark. On the other hand, the Danes have an unfortunate distaste for the Germans because of World War II. There are still very bad feelings about the Germans in Denmark. At one point a number of years ago the wealthy Germans were buying summer homes in Denmark

to the point where the Danes passed a law saying they couldn't do it because they were afraid all of their nice summer home property was being bought up by the wealthy Germans and they didn't want this to happen. But, the Danes, especially since reunification, have become even closer to the Germans economically than they were before. They have always been close linking their economy to a great extent to the German economy. One of the jokes in Copenhagen is something to do with how long does it take the central bank to change interest rates after the German bank changes its interest rates. The punch line is something like 30 seconds, meaning it is automatic.

Q: At this time, 1987-90, we are also talking about another development happening in Europe, the development of the European Union. This was really gathering momentum. One of our desires in Europe has always been to get them together so they won't fight each other, stop these sorts of European civil wars. Was there any disquiet or discomfort on our part during the time you were there about economic unification in Europe?

FLACK: There was in Denmark a certain distancing from the move towards union. The Danes do feel apart because of their connection with Scandinavia. You know, shortly after my arrival in Copenhagen, I remember the under secretary of the foreign ministry for political affairs, who became a very good friend of mine, Benny Kimbrey, who just died last spring, told me that Danish foreign policy is based all on multilateral arrangements. It is based on NATO, the UN, the Nordic union and the EU. One of the places where they were running into friction or contradictions was their relationship with their Nordic counterparts. There is a difference between the Nordics and the Scandinavians, the Scandinavians being Norway, Sweden and Denmark, and the Nordics including Finland and Iceland. The Scandinavian relationship is very, very close. They work very closely, have open borders between them for certain things. Denmark was pulled between becoming part of the EU and having to open their borders to the south, but Norway, for example, is not a member of EU. Where do we draw the border? Is it with Norway or with Germany. This has never really been totally answered, basically, because there are these competing ideas of what Denmark is. Is it Scandinavian or European. So far Denmark is not going to become a EURO country, not joining itself with the common currency. They are not entirely convinced that they want to be in this union.

Q: Were there any other developments during this time?

FLACK: We had some visits. Schultz came to Denmark while I was there to talk about NATO and so did Baker. One of the interesting things about Denmark besides Greenland, which is part of the Danish realm, is the island of Bornholm. If you look at the map and look way out in the Baltic, above East Germany and Poland, south of Sweden, there is an island called Bornholm which is Danish. Bornholm has always been a very sensitive island because it had very sensitive communications facilities for tracking submarines and all sorts of interesting things and was very important to NATO. I did visit Bornholm. One of the things I did in Denmark was to travel a lot in the country, give a lot of speeches, and to Greenland and to Bornholm. The only place which I did not go and which is another Danish possession is the Faeroe Islands which are up north off the coast of Norway. Bornholm is a very interesting island, a very unusual place, and if you want to go in the summer it is a lovely place.

Q: I think some of the MIGs landed there at one time.

FLACK: That's right. Denmark is a very interesting country in the sense that it is European and Scandinavian at the same time. You know, the Scandinavians consider the Danes to be the Latins of the Scandinavian group. They consider them to be kind of slow, lazy, and fun loving.

Q: That's because of the warm weather there.

FLACK: That's right; they are the soft ones of the group. The Danes are very close to the Norwegians because Norway was part of Denmark at one time, but there is a certain amount of animosity with the Swedes, just like there is between Norway and Sweden. Nevertheless they have very strong social and cultural ties. I often noted that when the minister of justice of Denmark had an issue he would simply call up his counterpart in Sweden and discuss it directly with him. I often thought their foreign services must be very frustrated because much of their business is simply carried on on a principal to principal basis and their embassies are left out of it entirely.

WARD THOMPSON
Political Counselor
Copenhagen (1987-1990)

Ward Thompson studied at Brown University and was sworn in as a Foreign Service Officer in 1966. His postings included Copenhagen, Seoul, Helsinki, and Gothenburg. He was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan in February, 1999.

Q: Well, then you went to Copenhagen in 1987 as political counselor. How large a staff did you have there?

THOMPSON: Well, we still had that traditional line-up of political counselor and then a labor-political guy, a woman, as the case was at the time, and then a junior officer. And we had, I guess, two FSN's at that point, a full-time secretary.

Q: Was the ambassador interested in internal Danish politics or mainly in foreign affairs? Or was he interested in both, or neither?

THOMPSON: This will be immediately clear to our readers when I tell you that the American ambassador was Terry Todman, one of the most successful Foreign Service officers, obviously interested in every sparrow that fell.

Q: So he took an interest in everything. Were you at the embassy surprised when Paul Schlüter was sent back in a general election?

THOMPSON: Well, this is the election of '87.

Q: *Yes.*

THOMPSON: That was when I got there. I don't think we were surprised. There was a tendency in Denmark, as you know, of throwing the rascals out, and Schlüter had been phenomenally successful, and obviously in Denmark, if you're successful, you get punished, one way or the other. But what Schlüter was punished for was an ill-advised statement when he called the elections, and in that system the prime minister can call elections. He called them and announced that they would be that September, so he could get them over with. And this was seen as extremely arrogant, with the implication that he was going to win, he just had to get this technicality out of the way. But, no, I think the result of the election was not a surprise.

Q: *Then they had another election in '88—*

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: *—that had to do with nuclear weapons.*

THOMPSON: Yes. This was perhaps the most interesting aspect of my time there. The Danes had, of course, been members of NATO from the time that NATO was founded, at which point it became obvious that there couldn't be a Nordic alternative or any other alternative to NATO. And Denmark always had reservations and restrictions on their extent of involvement. For example, they could not permit American bases nor could there be nuclear weapons.

Q: *No NATO bases except in Greenland, right?*

THOMPSON: Greenland was an exception, but on Danish soil proper there were foreign troops. The question of nuclear weapons became politically blurred when it applied to warships because the Brits and the Americans had a policy of not declaring whether they had nuclear weapons on board, so you had this charade for many years where Danish policy was no nuclear weapons on its soil or in its ports, and the assumption of the Danish Government was we complied with this policy. But they also knew that the policy of the allies was not to declare so that if they had come to us or to the UK, or France, for that matter, and said, "This is our policy. Do you have any nuclear weapons on board?" we would have said, "Well, we can't tell you." But there was no point in asking. As long as there was a majority of the big parties there was no problem. But during the '80's, you had a disaffection on the part of the Social Democrats on a lot of the security arrangements. And this was primarily for domestic reasons because there was always this pressure from the left so that they lost the automatic majority for Danish NATO participation. Regardless of whether it was a government of the left headed by the Social Democrats or a government of the right headed by the Conservatives, the answer would always be, "Hey, we've got it under control. Don't worry about it." But then as the '80's proceeded, there were some problems having to do with what was called the two-track approach to nuclear disarmament in Europe, and NATO decided that they would negotiate reduction of their nuclear weapons and intermediate nuclear weapons and at the same time it would build up its missiles if, and until, the other side agreed. And of course the other side didn't agree. The Danes didn't buy this. And it culminated in 1988 because somebody got the idea that the Danish Government should start being sure that there weren't any nuclear weapons on these visiting warships. Now because of

this strange security alignment in Parliament, you had what was called the security policy alternate majority, and that meant that Poul Schlüter had a center right government which had absolute power over most questions including the question of whether it could continue in office, but there was no longer any power over security questions. Then there was an alternate, which included the Social Democrats and the Radical Liberals, and how could this function in the parliamentary system? It functioned because they would never bring to a head whether the government had the confidence of the parliament. It was something that the Americans had a very hard time understanding. And finally the crunch came because parliament did pass this resolution which said that the government would have to ask whether our ships had nuclear weapons on them. Well, we'd been quite clear to the government, no surprise that we couldn't go along with this, and the government tried to come up with compromise wording. We said, "No, there is no compromise wording." So Poul Schlüter, once again, called an election. Now there was a lot of scurrying around. Ambassador Todman and I met several times privately with the head of the Social Democratic Party and with the architects of the Social Democratic security policy, who were left-wing politicians. And they just couldn't understand why there could be no compromise on this. Meanwhile, the press, because Todman also was meeting with Schlüter, the press concluded that it was Todman, the American ambassador, who had called the elections. There was absolutely no basis for that. I think Todman or I or anybody would have told anybody who'd listen that the government could not continue in that policy, and from Washington they were hearing things like Denmark would be another New Zealand, because New Zealand was cut out of the ANZUS cooperation after a similar piece of legislation.

So the election was held, and unlike most elections in Denmark, this one was held on a foreign policy issue, which had to do with Denmark's overall relationship with NATO. And the issues were debated in a healthy fashion, and there were a lot of subplots and undercurrents and so forth between the Social Democrats under the leadership of Sven Auken, who did not look very good. But the voters went to the polls. They returned almost an identical parliamentary constellation, but we had done something significant during the campaign. We had gotten Washington to agree that our approach to the Danes in general and to the Radical Liberals in particular should be "This is not the time to even talk about it. This is a time when you've had an actual agreement on reduction of nuclear weapons in Europe for the first time. Why upset the apple cart? Are you in favor of reducing the number of nuclear weapons in Europe? Because if you pursue this issue, then they won't get reduced. It's not a threat. It's a statement of fact."

The British minister of defense made quite clear that the Danish defense policy rests on NATO being integrated. In order to reinforce you have to hold exercises.

Q: And mainly from Britain, as I recall.

THOMPSON: Mainly from Britain, also from Canada. You have to hold exercises or it would be hopeless. And you can't exercise if the ships can't come into port. So the British prime minister knew that. So that not only would there be no progress in NATO, Denmark would remain a member of NATO, but it wouldn't have any more reinforcements, at which point NATO membership for Denmark would be meaningless. So with this message, the Social Liberals, the Radical Liberals, switched sides. And so the alternate security policy majority ceased to exist, and the majority government also had a majority on the security policy. And as an interesting

sidelight, eventually the head of the radical liberal party became Foreign Ministry and is, in fact, prime minister today.

Q: By the way, I wanted to ask you a question perhaps a little off to the side. Did this Danish disease spread to its sister Nordic, Norway? Did they have the same problem with regard to ships coming into port and nuclear weapons?

THOMPSON: I don't ever recall reading that. There was a similar problem. It happened earlier and it was resolved. It was resolved without dramatics. Interestingly, of course, Sweden had the same policy, and when I was in Gothenburg, there was a big blow-up over the visit of the British minesweeper to the port because the Brits would not say whether it had nuclear weapons on board.

Q: Normally they're not nuclear weapons carriers, but never mind.

THOMPSON: In fact, there was only one weapon on board, and that was a .50 caliber machine gun, and it was made by Bofors, which is a Swedish company.

I think what happened when I was in Gothenburg was typical of the Nordics, in that the local city boycotted the visit, but because there's also a province with its own structure and bureaucracy and the province was headed by a moderate, a Conservative, it was the province which hosted the visit. And I think that the Nordics have always been very flexible in finding a way to do what they wanted to do, and the leftists got their way about the ship visits, and ultimately in Norway as in Denmark, the government prevailed in favor of business as usual. Usually it was something that helped us in our agenda; sometimes it hurt us and was very vexing. Basically this pragmatic approach is completely Nordic and nice to deal with.

Q: I've always had the feeling that both Norway and Denmark, particularly, would do almost anything to remain under the NATO umbrella, and despite all their internal blather that one sometimes had, they did not want to lose their NATO membership.

THOMPSON: Well, it's always a question of marketing this to the public, and of course Denmark, having so many parties, having a low threshold for admission to the parliament, is constantly taking its own pulse, and the government always has to keep an eye on the voters, and the embassy keeps their eye on the left-wing press.

Q: Well, now, you happened to be there in Copenhagen at a time of quite considerable ferment in Central and Eastern Europe, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and with the rumblings of change in the Soviet Union, Poland, and other Eastern European countries. What was the atmosphere in Denmark at that time, particularly vis-à-vis the Soviet satellites?

THOMPSON: Well, I think that the Danish left focused on Denmark's relationship with NATO, looking at NATO as a problem and NATO as the enemy at worse. And the changes happening in Eastern Europe came somewhat by surprise. They sort of cut the argument out from under the left. On the right, I think there was more concern. Basically, the Nordics like the *status quo*, whatever it is, and they like to fine-tune their own domestic welfare states, and they don't like too

much rocking of the boat one way or the other internationally. That's how they survive. I remember when unification came in Germany. The Wall had fallen, and Prime Minister Schlüter had commented that it probably wouldn't be a good idea for the two Germanies to get back together. I remember that General Walters, the ambassador to Germany, had been chastised from Washington because he suggested the opposite, I think that things were going to happen fairly quickly. Well, how soon we learn. It became obvious that unification was a good thing, and that Schlüter was not in step. But I'm talking about the West, and not about the East, because the Danes are looking at the countries closest to them. You mentioned the Danish relationship with NATO and how Denmark wanted the NATO umbrella and all that. I think it's important to remember also that one of the important reasons for NATO from the Danes' point of view was controlling Germany. If Germany had to be rearmed, it was to be as a NATO force. If Germany had to become important and powerful again, then the relationship must be managed, and there had to be a large organization like NATO to do it. And this rationale, which is well documented and subscribed to by the Social Democrats, is one that doesn't depend on the Soviet Union for a threat to peace. And this is something that I think the Americans failed to understand at certain times, and I think perhaps the late '80's, the early '90's were one of those times, that, yes, it was very nice that the countries of the East were getting their freedom and whatever, but uncertainties about Germany were something that had to be taken into account. The biggest impact of those changes was that Denmark became a much more solid supporter of NATO. Hartman, to this day, is one of the strongest supporters of NATO. And as it's still debated in this city whether there's enough of a threat to keep NATO going, one must not lose sight of the fact that the virtue of NATO is that it helps the relationship of large countries like Germany with small countries like the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, and so forth. On the eastern side of the equation, the Danes never wanted to antagonize the Soviet Union. They were fortunately far enough removed so that they could subscribe to whatever the NATO policy was on the Soviet Union, but the upheavals in the Baltics changed that equation a little bit, because Denmark had historical ties to the Baltic countries, if you go back far enough, as you know, Denmark owned the Baltic countries. The Danish flag, the *Dannebrog*, supposedly came down from heaven on a battlefield in the Baltic countries, and this is generally known to the Danes, so that when there was this movement for independence, the Danes and the other Nordics responded quite strongly, and they provided contacts. They provided forums. At one point the Nordic Council was available for these Baltics to be given the floor. There were environmental organizations that encompassed the Baltic riparian states, and these were used to give some support for the independence of the peoples.

The Danes, I think, took the lead in developing a relationship with the Soviets on the question of . . . it's hard to define, but they would have public debates. I went to a number of events in Copenhagen where they had Soviets present. There was one radio program, which by agreement was broadcast simultaneously in Denmark in the Soviet Union, in which lawmakers from both sides were on a panel, and they discuss, essentially, human rights. But they also discussed disarmament questions, and it was an interesting give or take that would have, of course, been impossible a few years before that. So the Danes saw themselves as being part of this process of Baltic independence and of general Soviet *glasnost*. And I think they did play quite a role, which has continued. When independence came and developed the relationship, I think particularly with Latvia, you mentioned the leftist press, and of course the Communist newspaper no longer exists, and its printer was quite literally packaged and given, I think, away, because the Danes were providing these fledgling democracies with the tools of survival.

Q: As long as they didn't give the philosophy.

THOMPSON: Oh, no. No, the Danes are very good at promoting this sort of contact, and I think that they are among countries who are trying to nudge NATO in certain directions. For one thing, of course, the Danes are in favor of dramatic expansion of both NATO and the EU. The Danes prefer broadening to deepening. Their Soviet policy became their Russian policy, and that was one of engagement. Détente was definitely something that the Danes favored. They did not like our confrontational approach. But always keep in mind the fact that NATO for them was not just a one-issue organization. These are the changes. And just as they're more secure now with NATO, I think probably they're a little more leery of deepening of the EU because they don't want constraints on the EU.

Q: Well, any other comments about the tour in Copenhagen? Any other subjects we should discuss?

THOMPSON: Well, yes. There's an important subject which had to do with Greenland. Greenland, of course, is still part of Denmark. It was granted home rule by the Danes in the '70's, I guess.

Q: Yes.

THOMPSON: Late '70's. Now at the time Greenland and Denmark joined the EC together, I think in 1973, but when Greenland was granted home rule, it held a referendum and left this, the only country to leave the EC, the EU. And that was just an example of how it does have many areas where it's sort of independent. In fact, now, the only role that Denmark has is in foreign policy and defense. Greenland has taken over the medical health and the police and the justice functions. But Greenland exists with a large Danish subsidy like a block grant, which keeps going the policy of extending to every citizen of Greenland the same benefits of every citizen of Denmark. No matter where you live, you have education, health, and that sort of thing. Greenland in the '80's still had the defense and security relationship with the United States, and this was established in the '50's, and that is a series of early warning stations across the ice cap and two large air force bases, Søndre Strømfjord and Thule. Our Defense Department considered all but Thule obsolete by the mid '80's and was interested in divesting themselves of it. So one thing I was involved in was negotiating the demise of these. Now the "eye sites," as they were called, these stations across the ice cap, had no intrinsic value to anybody else, and so they had to be closed. Two of them were on solid ground, but rather isolated. They're fantastic. I don't know if you ever visited one—

Q: I never visited.

THOMPSON: But it's like a hotel or something. It's like a womb. It's very much like a naval ship, you know, everything on board. You don't have to leave the facility, several stories high, with game rooms and commissary and cafeteria. The one thing that you couldn't get, you'd have to go down to the village for, and some of the guys did that. But the ones on the ice cap had nothing.

There was no village, and I heard that there were some pretty strange people there. One fellow had been there for 15 years, and there was no way they could get him to leave.

Q: *Good heavens.*

THOMPSON: Anyway, negotiating their dismantling was not that much of a problem. Oh, technically, of course, we had to get rid of them. We couldn't leave them on the ice cap. And I mentioned at the beginning of our conversation the question of the bombers. There was, unfortunately, that precedent, that we had to take care of our garbage up there. Now as an aside, literally, we haven't taken care of all of our garbage. There were a number of American sites, going back to World War II, where there is still garbage. There are derelict bases. Some of this property has been put to use by the Greenlanders. There was a base on the east coast, I mean further north of the only town, Ammassalik, and the officers' club is now down in Ammassalik as a community club. I've been there. So they used the building, but the case of Sondre Stromfjord was completely different because that was the only major international airport in Greenland.

Now Greenland is an island, and you can say "*on* Greenland," but we never say "*on* Greenland" because Greenland is a country. We say "*in* Greenland," and it's very offensive not to say "*in* Greenland." In typing these notes, we will have to say "*in* Greenland."

It's possible for shorter-range jet aircraft to land at one or two facilities in the south, but the only place where a 747 or a DC-10 could fly is this airport. And we were, in effect, providing the international club for the Greenlanders. And we were paying for it. Our taxpayers were paying for it. So naturally we couldn't just walk away. We had a trilateral negotiation, with the Greenlanders and the Danes, over how we were going to downsize this and eventually leave. Well, we did. I mean, they had no choice. So we did leave, and it's theirs today. We provided certain things and undertook to clean up certain things, but basically it was a question of getting an attitude adjustment on the part of the Danes, because—

Q: *Have they kept that airport open?*

THOMPSON: The airport is open, yes, and it's being run by the Greenlanders, and I'm sure it's the Danish money that's there. And last I heard, the person from NORAD who had been one of the key people resigned as a colonel and went to work out there at the base.

I visited Greenland three times in 1989. The first time was for orientation, and the embassy economic officer and I, both Danish language experts, went off there and visited Nuuk, the capital, and then Ammassalik and another town in Greenland as well as one of the die sites and Sondrestrom. And in Nuuk, we met with the government. It's not very difficult to do in such small population. And the prime minister, then as now, is Jonathan Motzfeldt, and we had a good session with him. He told us about his, at that time, recent visit to the Vatican to meet with the Pope. He said that the Pope had prepared himself very well by doing his homework, and he said, "Mr. Motzfeldt, I understand you're from Greenland and that Greenland is the largest island in the world and that it is seven-eighths covered with ice." And Motzfeldt said, "Well, yes, Holy

Father, Greenland is the largest Island in the world, and it is seven-eighths covered with ice, but you should realize that the one-eighth that is not covered with ice is larger than Norway."

Q: Touché.

THOMPSON: Yes. Yes, it's a large expanse and a society of slightly over 40,000 Inuit. It is small, but certainly viable. They have a problem in that there's only one export commodity now, and that's shrimp. The cod have disappeared. The few minerals they were extracting are no longer viable. So they're in a down period.

Q: *Is there anything above secondary education there, or is there even secondary education?*

THOMPSON: Yes, there is. There's full secondary education, and there's even a technical school at the university level. Many still come to Denmark.

Q: *Yes, I remember in my time that many Greenlanders were there.*

THOMPSON: But the other thing that they have that is contact with the world is the US base at Thule. And this has been the subject of a lot of the talks. I visited Thule twice. I went there first as part of the negotiations with the Danes, and so the Danes, Greenlanders, and Americans all met there and then went to Sondrestrom. And then the Danes and the Americans continued to the Pentagon. That was an exciting week, flying all over the Globe.

Q: *I can imagine, yes.*

THOMPSON: But the last time I went back was later in that year, and the Danish Parliamentary Defense Committee was making an inspection tour, and this was like an American CODEL, of course. They get together and get themselves an airplane and toddle off. And since they were visiting American bases, it was agreed that I would join them for the visits to the two bases. So I was in the States on personal business, and I flew up from McGuire Air Force Base to Thule and got there just before they arrived. And then we had our meetings in Thule, and we went and visited the site where the Greenlanders had been dislodged in order to build the base in the first place, and so on. And then the next day, they invited me to ride on their C-130 down to Sondrestrom. And that was very interesting. I knew most of the members, and there were several very important people on board—of course, the defense minister, but also the current defense minister, who then was in opposition, and others who are now in the Government who were very young people at the time. And it was a great view of the ice cap. There was mention made that perhaps it wasn't quite proper to fly so low over the ice, but somebody said, "Well, ultimately who's in charge?" And they said, "Well, the minister of defense, and he's on the plane." So the pilots—

Q: *The pilots were good.*

THOMPSON: Yes, they skimmed over the ice cap, and they skimmed alongside the icebergs in the ocean. It was a quite memorable trip.

Q: You really got a view of it.

THOMPSON: And then we got to Sondrestrom, and I had been there in April, and of course, it was bitter cold. This time it was in the '70's, and I and the parliamentarians went out and took a hike on very hot and dusty roads, and they have hot hills. It's quite unusual. Anyway, the upshot of these talks was that the Greenlanders got a little more access to northern Greenland via Thule, but this resolution came much after I left. The only relevant thing that was going on when I was there had to do, again, with the B-52 crash from 1968. So here it was 1989 and 1990. They finally did pretty much resolve it after I left the post, but it took over 20 years.

Q: It was a hangnail, I know, when I was there, too.

THOMPSON: And of course, it was just symptomatic of the artificial relationship among the three players, between the Greenlanders, the American, and the Danes. Were it not for the Cold War, that real estate would have held no interest. There were probably twenty of us, because most of the Greenlanders lived on the south of the Island.

Q: There is agriculture in southern Greenland, isn't there?

THOMPSON: There is. I mean, Greenland is, for example, self-sufficient in potatoes. There is a herd of sheep around Thule. They can grow vegetables; they can grow hay. It's a tiny place, relatively, but since it's such a large island, there's a lot of acreage. And I think if we are into a period of global warming, that this will quickly transform the Greenlanders' economy. When the Vikings settled there, around 900 or so, it was green. It was lush, and they farmed there. Eventually, after three or four centuries, the waters froze so that re-supply from Norway was impossible, and they died out. There are artifacts. There's a stone building and other artifacts, so there's no doubt that they were there. The sagas give the record of it. And if it was warm 1200 years ago, it can be warm again, just like the wheat line in Canada moving north.

Q: We'll maybe see the grapes growing in Greenland again, who knows?

THOMPSON: That's right.

Q: Well, then in 1990, you came back again to the Department—

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: —and you were in INR, as you explained this morning, as Nordic analyst.

THOMPSON: Yes.

Q: Who was the director of INR at that time?

THOMPSON: Well, by then it was Bill Miller, Dr. Bowman Miller, who in 1980 was a German analyst and worked his way up, a very gifted person, academic civil servant, a fantastic operator

in the bureaucracy of the State Department, understands very well the Foreign Service, a very good man for that job.

Q: Great. What were the major issues you had to wrestle with there?

THOMPSON: Well, quite simply it was the EU. That was the consuming issue for all five of the Nordics of the '90's. You had the applications by Sweden and Finland and then you had the Maastricht Treaty. Some countries felt that they should have referendums on the Maastricht Treaty in addition to the non-members who were having referendums on whether to join. Denmark had a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty and it was defeated, and of course that gave us plenty to do because then there was all this scrambling around. Actually, the French came quite close to defeating it, but they didn't. But the Danes did, and then the question was what do you do with the Danes.

Q: I was in Denmark when we voted to join the EU.

THOMPSON: That's right. Well, it was a very close vote, and the Danes, I think, were determined from the start to have another referendum, which is not really fair. Once you vote, that's it. You can't keep going until you get what you want. But they negotiated some understandings and got the so-called "Four Reservations."

Q: More footnotes.

THOMPSON: Yes. Denmark has opted out of many things and cannot participate in those aspects without another referendum. And right now we've paralyzed them with that very issue. So that gave us a headache, but that was resolved because by the next year the Danes did have a referendum, and they agreed on the four opt-outs, and so they stayed in the EC and, more important, participated in the EU. Meanwhile, there were referendums in the other three Nordic countries. Iceland never got to the point where it could even agree on considering applying. And the Norwegians defeated membership again in their referendum. When they did that, the Icelanders didn't even have to discuss it. And of course another important related aspect of this was the issue of aid in the European economic area, which was conceived to bridge the memberships of EFTA and the EC. And what it amounted to, since EFTA dwindled, since most of its members joined the EU, it amounted to Norway and Iceland, and they had joined. Switzerland didn't. But because of the EEA, which was agreed in Norway and Iceland, these countries abide by and benefit from the economic decisions of the EU, but they don't have a voice.

KEITH LAPHAM BROWN
Ambassador
Denmark (1989-1992)

Keith Lapham Brown was born in 1925 in Sterling Illinois. He attended Northwestern University and University of Texas and became a lawyer and a law

school professor. Ambassador Brown was ambassador to Lesotho and Copenhagen and was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in November, 2000.

Q: Lafayette Square.

BROWN: Yes. I got a call before our Eagle event started, at the Decatur House, from Bob Tuttle. He indicated the president had agreed to send me as ambassador to Denmark. That was November 4, 1987. When the program started, John Whitehead, who was Deputy Secretary of State, was sitting at my table. He came rushing in to me, and said, "Keith, you haven't heard the good news, the president is going to send you to Denmark." I said, "I just heard, and I'm delighted, and appreciate your help." Next came Howard Baker, who was Chief of Staff at that time. He said, "Keith, I just got good news for you." I said, "I just heard." So that was quite a nice evening.

Q: Oh, wonderful.

BROWN: The president was there, and I took the president around and acted as sort of his host. We went from table to table, introducing him to different people. One thing I recall is the president had a glass of wine. I had never seen him have a drink, or take a drink. But he more or less held this glass of wine all the way around the room, meeting people and such. He stayed for about an hour. He left and we had our program. From then on, I was hell-bent on becoming ambassador to Denmark. I didn't realize what an awful difficult time it was going to be.

Q: Well, I always like to get this at the beginning. You were ambassador to Denmark from when to when?

BROWN: I actually went over in January of 1989, until January of 1992, three years.

Q: Why did it take so long?

BROWN: First of all, you go through a lot of paperwork, which I did. For some reason, it took longer. I was in Washington a lot, trying to get the thing moving. So, they put my name up in June to the Foreign Relations Committee. At any rate, by that time, it was getting closer to the election. No matter how many people I had called, Senator Claiborne Pell, who was the chairman of the committee, would not actually hold a hearing for me or several other nominees. Senator Bill Armstrong from Colorado did everything in the world he could do. We could not get a hearing. I take that back, we got several hearings. I would come from Colorado to Washington, and find that they had canceled the hearing. I bet I made four different trips for four different committee hearings, and Claiborne Pell, I have to say, was the one who always canceled. Senator Dodd of Connecticut, a Democrat, made an agreement with Bill Armstrong that they would schedule me for a hearing, and they did, twice. I would come back to Washington, and each time, the night before, I was notified that the committee had canceled the hearing. So, it was a very unpleasant time. I struggled with everybody in the world.

Q: Was there anybody who could convince Senator Pell?

BROWN: No, I had Ambassador Tom Watson, who was a great friend of mine, try to help. He had been ambassador to the Soviet Union. He called his friend, Claiborne Pell, and talked with him. Claiborne Pell said, "I'm sure Keith Brown is a fine man, but I'm not going to have any hearings and send anybody over to assignment this late in the game." It got down to August. It was all over. I knew I couldn't get a hearing after that. The Senate adjourned in August. I unpacked my bags, and my wife put everything back on the shelves. We figured that was that. Then, after the election, John Whitehead called me, and Bob Tuttle also called, and said, "The president is going to give you a recess appointment." He gave four ambassadors recess appointments. I was the only non-career. The other three were career. There were 25 others nominated to different departments of the government, but they had not been able to get confirmed. So he put them on the list and gave them all recess appointments. On a recess appointment, as you might know, you go over to your post without a confirmation. You can stay until the end of the next session of Congress, unless you are confirmed in the meantime. That's what happened to me. I went over to post and presented my credentials, and was ambassador. In July 1989, I came back to the United States and had a hearing at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It was sort of amusing. They had about 10 or 12 senators on the committee, but I was supposed to be about number three of about 10, or 12 people. These were all new Bush appointments.

Maybe I should back up. When they told me I was going to get the recess appointment, I didn't want to go over there and then be called right back home. It would be embarrassing, and expensive for the government, and so forth. I called Jimmy Baker, who was a friend. I said, "Jimmy, I've taken this recess appointment."

Q: He was Secretary of State.

BROWN: He was the Secretary of State to be. This was in November, after the election, but before the new administration was sworn in. He didn't give me an absolute commitment. He said, "I wouldn't worry about it pal." I decided to go ahead on that. So, the Bush administration had never given me an absolute commitment that I was going to stay. Well, now I'll go back to the hearing I was telling you about. Shirley Temple Black was on the list. She asked to be moved up on the schedule because she had some other appointments or something. So they moved her up and then they moved a couple others up. Out of 11 people, I ended up the last person. I thought, "Oh, my God, they are going to adjourn, and I'm going to go back to Denmark and still not have my confirmation." It finally got down to Senator Joe Biden and me. It was about 1:30 in the afternoon. He kept looking at his watch. He asked me one or two questions. He said, "I understand you are doing a good job, keep it up. But we don't like recess appointments." I said, "I understand Senator, I didn't like it either. I didn't get any other choice." So, that was it, it took five minutes. I was confirmed.

Q: When you went out to Denmark, you actually went out in 1989?

BROWN: I went out in January of 1989.

Q: When you were getting briefed and all that...

BROWN: I spent all of 1988 in and out of Washington.

Q: What was the state of our relations with Denmark, and when you went out there, what did you see at that time, before you went out, as being the principal things you were going to have to deal with?

BROWN: We had almost no bilateral issues with Denmark. They were very, very supportive. We were very supportive with them. We had no real controversy. The only thing that was bothersome was that they didn't always agree with the NATO decisions. They would footnote them. The decision would be made, but Denmark would make a footnote to the decision, at NATO meetings, that they had some misgivings or reservations, or something. So those were known as sort of the footnote days. Otherwise there was nothing you could call controversial. They were a socialistic democracy. They had pluralistic elections. Many, many parties would participate. So the government was always a coalition government of leaders from several parties. This is getting into the whole theory of government, but the countries that have that kind of system have trouble getting a lot of things done, because they have to make compromises. That was the situation in Denmark and still is, I'm sure.

Q: When you talk about the NATO footnotes, what was sort of the thrust of the footnotes? Where did they have misgivings?

BROWN: I can't think of the specific issues. Sometimes it had to do with defense appropriations. Many countries had some misgivings about nuclear navy ships. We had a policy of "neither confirm nor deny." I can't tell you what specifically, but there were many occasions when Denmark would footnote rather than disturb the whole NATO process. They would just footnote it.

Q: When you went there, how did you find the embassy?

BROWN: I had met with my DCM to be. He was on home leave in 1988. So I met him and his wife. My wife was with me. We had become good friends, and I had good briefings from him. He was an outstanding DCM, I thought.

Q: Who was it?

BROWN: His name was Ron Flack. He had gotten a little crosswise with my predecessor, Ambassador Todman. I don't think Todman gave him too great an evaluation report at one point. So Ron Flack never became ambassador, but he held outstanding positions. The embassy I took over, I thought, was very good. It was a well-run embassy. It was larger than I had realized. It had several detachments that were ancillary to the main embassy. We had a veterinary detachment that handled all meat in Europe. We had an F-16 Air Force detachment that trained Danish pilots. They had to be part of the embassy because Denmark had a rule that you could not have foreign troops on their soil, so they had to be attached to the embassy. So we had several of those, which made the embassy a little larger. That added to our administrative work. We eventually got into a lot of problems of having to downsize the embassy, which happened all over Europe.

Q: That was after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

BROWN: Yes, all embassies, particularly European embassies, where your pay scales were so large you had to downsize to free up resources to open new Embassies in Eastern Europe. You could have had 50, 100 people on the payroll in Lesotho for the cost of what it took to put 20 Foreign Service nationals in Denmark. In some cases I think I heard or read where a couple of FSNs were getting paid more than the ambassador.

Q: How did you find that taking over from Terry Todman... I know Terry. He has the reputation of being sort of one of the imperial ambassadors. The whole embassy is in support of him. It was a very ambassador-centric time. How did you deal with that? It's your embassy now?

BROWN: Everybody operates differently. I am more hands-on and I liked to have lunch at the diplomat restaurant in our embassy. I made a practice of sitting at different tables and talking with the different people, FSNs, our embassy people, the agriculture attaches, the military attaches, etc. I just thought it was a good way to get acquainted and learn some of the problems. I understand Ambassador Todman had a different approach. He sat at his own table, and no one approached that table unless they were invited. We had a different manner. He was an outstanding ambassador and an experienced diplomat. I see him from time to time now.

Q: He's on our board.

BROWN: Yes. We're good friends. When we had our Council of American Ambassadors trip to South America, I ran into Todman in Buenos Aires and I asked him to join us for dinner, which he couldn't do. It's just a different way of operating. We had an inspection in 1991. Our inspectors commented that I had a different approach. My way of dealing with people was more one-on-one, and hands-on, I guess.

Q: What issues did you find yourself enmeshed in Denmark, when you got there?

BROWN: Well, the first two years were different than the third year. 1981 was an unbelievably full year.

Q: 1991.

BROWN: Yes, in 1991 we had, of course, the breakdown of the eastern bloc. In 1990 we had the Berlin wall. Then we had a queen's visit to Washington in 1991. We had the downsizing of the embassy, which was a very difficult, trying time. Finally, we had to "RIF," reduction in force. We had to RIF FSNs. Well, you can imagine what that did to our morale. We tried very hard to get all 12 of those employed with other embassies in Copenhagen, but not successfully. It was just a very busy year. Of course, it was my last year. I found out in about the fall of 1991, that I would be coming home in January 1992, which terminated my three years. Being a recess appointment, I was ahead in post, of all the Bush appointments, because they didn't get there until about June or July of 1989, and I got there in January. I had a little seniority among all the European ambassadors. As far as other problems or issues that I dealt with, we had attached to

our embassy a very large military attachment. It was just astounding. Every ambassador had tried before me, it seemed like, to downsize that, to merge some of the people. We had a full Navy captain, who was the head of the military attachment. We had a full Army colonel. We had a full Air Force colonel. We had a Marine major. Then they each had staff. Then we had a European ODC, Office of Defense Cooperation. They handled military sales and other military aspects. When you got down to it, it was just huge. Every inspection before me had all recommended that that be downsized. So I got busy and worked on that as one of my biggest goals. Before I left I did get that underway. I filed an NSDD-38 report, which required sharings, and required Washington to pass on it. After I left, I found out that they did make some downsizing. They didn't do the whole job I wanted them to do.

But it was very controversial. The military and I had a little disagreement. The General in Ramstein wasn't very happy with me. At one point he said, "Why don't you come down here and we will sit down and talk it all over?" I said, "General, we can't afford to travel down there. That is how desperate we are." He said, "We'll send the plane down for you, and you'll be our guest for four days. It won't cost a cent." I said, "That's the problem. Your military doesn't realize we are trying to cut back." He was going to send a jet to take me down to Ramstein. At any rate, I would say, the first year at post you're doing all sorts of meetings with ambassadors and meetings with the government people. You are making all your courtesy calls. You're getting acquainted with the foreign ministry. You are getting acquainted with your own staff. So I did all that. But, in the middle of the first year, we started having guests like I couldn't believe. Everybody I had known, or might have known, kept descending on us.

Q: A little bit different than Lesotho.

BROWN: Yes. In Lesotho, I maybe had 18 guests total. I had talked with my friend Ambassador Anne Armstrong. She had been in England, at St. James. She told me that she finally had a system which she called receptions. Her husband called them whiskey parties. When people called and said that they were in town, and "we would love to see you," that usually meant, "Can't you have us out to dinner? Can we meet you for lunch at the embassy?" She said she grouped them into Wednesdays and Fridays, or Mondays and Wednesdays. That became a very good practice. You would love to see a lot of your friends and everything, but you just couldn't give your day away to these guests. My wife spent a lot of time taking them around the country and showing them sights and things. I couldn't do it. We would have those receptions, two or three times a week, at 5:00, 5:30, until 7:30. Then they would all go on their way or, in some cases, we would have a few to dinner.

During my first year, the Pope made a visit to Denmark. He's not very popular in Denmark. It's a very big Lutheran country. They had some controversy over that. But, we all met with the Pope. I had a very fine session with him. He talked about meeting President Bush and that he enjoyed his conversations with him. Those were the exciting sort of things that happened.

Q: As the Soviet Union came to an end and the Berlin wall fell, what were you getting about the impression of the Danes, the next door neighbor? Their very big next door neighbor was unified.

BROWN: I'm not sure I follow you. You mean the Russians?

Q: No, I mean the Danes found themselves next to a completely unified Germany. I would think that it's all well and good, but to a certain extent Denmark is very small, and now we have a much bigger Germany.

BROWN: On that particular issue, Denmark is not very friendly to Germany. They do trade with them. They do a lot of agriculture trade. Of course, West Germany was part of NATO, so they had NATO exercises in Denmark. The head of the largest shipping company in Denmark, the Maersk Lines, was Maersk McKinney Moeller. He's still with us, he's almost 90. He was an outstanding man. I became a very good friend, and he became a very good supporter. It was a privilege to know him and I still correspond with him. He told me that he still had the prejudice of World War II and he just couldn't seem to get it out of his system. He said, "When NATO comes here for their exercises, and they pull their ships alongside the canal here, by my office, I'd rather look out at some other ship than a German ship. Could you change that for me?" I didn't do a thing about it. It gave you some of the feeling they had; probably some of the older ones who had served. Maersk Moeller happened to be running their New York office, I think, when World War II hit, so he spent the whole war in the United States. I don't know that the unification bothered them any more than their general feeling about them.

In early November 1990, I was going to Wiesbaden for my physical, which you are required to do once a year. It was right after the wall had come down. It was just a few days. I said, "Let's go to Berlin on the way to Wiesbaden." So we did. It was an outstanding experience. I'll never forget it. The checkpoint Charlie was still there, and we had to go through that. The procedure was you didn't roll your window down, and talk to the East Germans. You just showed your passport through the window, and then they waved you through. That was the compromise they made after the airlift battle. At any rate, the East Germans were free to come into West Germany. It was an outpouring. The people were just flooding across the border. The East German soldiers had flowers in the barrels of their rifles.

We were having dinner one night in a West German hotel. We were seated right along the window of the dining room. The East Germans came by in droves. They would look in and it wasn't with any bad feeling. They just were astonished. It was disbelief. It wasn't envy or anger. You could just see them in absolute astonishment that we were sitting there eating a beautiful plate of food. They had never seen that. In the two days we were there we saw them all over downtown West Berlin. You could tell by their hats and their clothes that they were East Germans. Countries get tired of refugees after a time. We predicted that this outpouring of West Germans handing out money and food to their East German friends wouldn't go on forever. It did stop after a few months. They became a little irritated with all the East Germans, and you know the history from them on. In 1991 they actually had the reunification. We happened to be in Hamburg meeting with our consul general, Jim Whitlock. That night they had the big celebration. The reunification was a big wild, drunken celebration all over Hamburg. I felt pretty fortunate, not only seeing the Berlin wall come down but being there at the reunification. Two different events.

Q: How about events in Yugoslavia? Were we consulting with the Danish government on this at all?

BROWN: Well, let me back up. During the Persian Gulf War, I was probably over at the foreign ministry, almost once a day. We had the demarches coming in from Washington. I'm sure every embassy in Europe was getting the same. So I spent an awful lot of time with their foreign minister. His name was Uffe Ellemann-Jensen. He was an outstanding man who became a very good friend. Denmark wanted to do everything in the world they could. But they were a little country and they didn't have a lot of military resources. They sent a corvette into the Persian Gulf that sort of stood by to take on anybody that was in trouble or injured. They were going to provide an ancillary service. One of the greatest things they did that I remember is, there's a little town up in Jutland, called Holstebro. They had a hospital that had been put into storage. When the Persian War broke out, they reactivated that. We had to agree to what is called an "MOU," Memorandum of Understanding. The military in Stuttgart was not very anxious to get it done, but I was. So I pushed ahead and we finally agreed to it. The Danish government was certainly delighted. People in Holstebro reopened the hospital. At the same time some citizens there, a little town of 1,200 people, went from door to door and got people to agree to take relatives of wounded soldiers into their homes as guests when they might come to visit their wounded relatives. So they arranged for 1,200 beds out of that little community to accommodate American mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, or whatever. So, I went to Holstebro, where we had the signing. It was very, very emotional to me to see those people. They were so wonderful to do that. When I went back to Washington on a visit with the queen, when she had a session with the U.S. Senate, they asked for any other remarks, and I told that story. I remember Senator Lugar came over and said, "That's the most fabulous thing in the world, a little town, in a little country, to show us that much support." I don't know if I explained that right or not.

Q: You did. When the circumstances came, we were expecting very large casualties, which didn't happen.

BROWN: None of this was ever used, of course. But, it was there and in place. I was very proud of what they had done. I was very proud that I got the Memorandum of Understanding signed in order to make it possible.

Q: Well, how about Denmark in the United Nations? How did we find Denmark?

BROWN: Denmark was usually very supportive of almost every issue we had in the United Nations, as opposed to my experience in Lesotho, which always voted with the African block. In Lesotho, they would say, "You know, Ambassador, we are with you, but we have to vote against it." You remember Jeanne Kirkpatrick, when she became UN ambassador, said "Well, you aren't going to have that anymore. You are either going to step up and say we're with you, and you tell me that in the hallway, I expect you to vote that way in the assembly. If you don't, we're going to remember it." I didn't have that problem at all in Denmark. Whenever there was an issue in the UN there was usually a call for me to make a demarche. I would go over, and it was a very friendly session, and the foreign minister or the deputy foreign minister would say, "Well, you know, ambassador, we're with you, so you don't have to worry about it." I can't recall that we ever had any differences. I don't think we did.

Q: How did you find, just in your observations, the relations between Denmark and Norway, and Denmark and Sweden?

BROWN: Well, they had a Scandinavian Council, and they worked together. We had a Scandinavian group of ambassadors that had a meeting in Stockholm at one time. I would say that most of their issues were the same. They had some differences. Denmark built the great Belt Bridge. The bridge was thought to be too low to get some drilling rigs under it on their way up to Finland. That was a big controversy. It was for me also, because initially our government seemed to be perfectly happy about the bridge being built. There was one bridge company out of New York, and they were the only people from the United States who were involved. So I worked with them a great deal. We were successful. At about the time Denmark was awarding the contract, the United States government said, "We don't think this is a very good deal. We think the bridge is too controversial; we might have to oppose it." I went back to them and said, "How can you do this? The time to do that was a long time ago. Here we have our neck way out and we've been working with the U.S. company. It's a multimillion dollar contract." It was a done deal, as far as I could see. So, we had a lot of controversy over that. Again, that was in 1991, which I said was the busiest year I ever had. Our government finally approved it. The international court ruled for Denmark against Finland. Our government did not take the position against the bridge. That would have been a mess. One of the fallouts of that was that the head of the bridge company wrote a very glowing report to Larry Eagleburger about all the work I had done and how pleased and delighted they were. It was a real accolade for me. So Larry sent it on to me with a little note, "Keep up the good work." I got this in December 1991, and I was leaving in January. Larry certainly knew I was leaving. But, he did write, "Keep up the good work," and I thought, "Well, for 30 days, I'll try to keep up the good work."

Q: Is the bridge in place now?

BROWN: Oh, yes. Not only that bridge is in place, but in the 10 years I have been gone, they have built a bridge going from the airport, south of Copenhagen, to Malmö, Sweden. It's a tunnel and a bridge. So the ships can go over the tunnel, you see. Both bridges are railroad and automobile bridges. You can drive from the tip of Finland, Russia actually, to the boot of Italy and never get out of your car.

Q: How did you find relations with other embassies there?

BROWN: Excellent, including the Russian embassy. In 1990, early on really, they hadn't broken up the Soviet Union and the Berlin wall hadn't fallen. It was in February. The Russian ambassador asked my wife and me to come to lunch. We had a wonderful time. He wanted to toast every word that was said with vodka. You just had to watch yourself. He, through an interpreter, was very, very open. He practically told me that the Soviet Union was going to be changed in very, very violent ways. This was in February. I wrote a very extensive cable back to the States about that meeting, because he said that things were changing, and that they weren't going to be the same country or government. He, in effect, was telling me what was coming up, which did happen later in the year. Then, I guess, to reward him, they sent him to Afghanistan as the ambassador. I saw him before he left. I congratulated him and he looked at me with a sick smile and said, "Ambassador, don't congratulate me on being sent to Afghanistan." So he knew, I

guess, it wasn't a great promotion. It was a very controversial post at the time, as you know, because Russia was at war with them.

Q: What were some of the other issues?

BROWN: Well, we talked about the Persian Gulf War.

Q: Was that at all controversial, as far as Danish support?

BROWN: Not at all. I think there were a couple members of the Folketing, which is the Parliament, who were a little passive and not happy about bombing. Basically, the whole government and all the military, and everybody I came in contact with... I don't think I met anybody who wasn't very favorable.

I'll skip right ahead and go into this in a more detailed way. They have a celebration every year on the Fourth of July in Denmark. It's the only country in the world that celebrates our Fourth of July. It started about 85, 90 years ago, by some Danes who came to this country and made a great success. They came back and bought some country in the hills of Jutland, called Rebild. Every year, 15 or 20 thousand Danes in this country fly to Denmark and participate in the Rebild ceremony. Every year we participate and the Ambassador reads a message from the president. The first year, they had Wally Schirra as the U.S. guest and he was a tremendous hit. Everybody loved him. He gave a very humorous but wonderful speech. The next year, they had Richard Chamberlain. He was outstanding and everybody loved him. The third year, they had Garrison Keillor. I looked forward to it. I knew of Garrison Keillor, and I had read some of his stuff. When he arrived at our residence for a party before the Fourth of July, he barely spoke to me. I couldn't figure out what the problem was. I had a house guest, George Pillsbury, and his wife, from Minneapolis, who knew Garrison Keillor. He was very cold to them. Pillsbury said, "What's wrong with him? I know Garrison." I said, "I don't know. He just didn't seem to be very happy." But then we went over to Alborg where they were celebrating before going to the Rebild ceremonies. One of our Navy ships is always there for this occasion and we have a reception on the ship. He sent word that he did not care to come aboard a United States Navy ship. That was pretty strange. When we got to the Rebild festival, he made some very funny remarks. Then, he made- I brought it with me, so you would know it - he made some very damaging remarks that were very insensitive and out of order.

In his speech, he said, "If America had had any kind of contact with the Arab world, and lived with Muslims, any common culture, any understanding of their language or religion, which we do not, would we have done what we did? Would we have poured such destruction on them in the Gulf War? Would we have then celebrated it like a football victory? Would we have killed 100,000 with so little feeling? We did not care about them, because we did not see them as human. But God does, and may God have mercy on us." It was shocking. The Danish military and all the Danish ministers were up in arms. The Danish speaker was the minister of agriculture, and he was livid. He was sitting next to me, and I was sitting next to Prince Joakim, the Danish Prince. I felt it was incumbent upon me to write a letter to the leading Copenhagen newspaper - the Politiken - in which I strongly protested, by saying Garrison Keillor's remarks were totally

inappropriate, in poor taste, and simply absurdly timed, but I didn't say that he didn't have the right to say them, but that became the phony argument that Keillor tried to make.

Q: You might explain who Garrison Keillor is.

BROWN: He is a kind of home-spun humorist out of Minneapolis. He has written books on Lake Wobegon, a mythical place in Minnesota. He is very humorous.

Q: Oh, he is.

BROWN: In my letter I made two points. I said his remarks were inaccurate. We did have an understanding. We had Fulbright scholars and Fulbright programs with the Arab countries. Then I said, "He showed poor taste to use this event to air his personal prejudices." After all, he was a guest. I wrote my letter, of course, in English and sent it to the paper. They translated it and put it in the paper in Danish. He wrote a letter back, that showed he was out of control, he was so mad. He said, "The Ambassador's Danish is disgusting and embarrassing." I replied, "I didn't write my letter in Danish, I wrote it in English, and the paper translated it." I was able to kid with the paper editors and said, "Is your Danish really that bad that Garrison Keillor, who claims he knows how to speak Danish, can criticize it?" There were some people who did write, saying, "Don't you believe in free speech?" But of course, I never said he didn't have a right to free speech. I never formally replied again. But my PAO answered several letters saying, "The ambassador certainly believes that Garrison Keillor has the right of free speech, and so does the Ambassador, and he replied in free speech. If you say things like Keillor did, then you can expect answers like the Ambassador's, which we thought were appropriate." So, from my standpoint, I had nothing but support from Danes over this event. From the foreign minister on down all were very supportive. They were all disgusted with Garrison Keillor, who came across as a bad-mannered boor. Next, he was to speak at the American Club, which is 95% Danes, and they canceled him out. I had nothing to do with it and, in fact, didn't know he was scheduled to speak. They canceled him as the speaker, so he wrote another nasty letter saying that he was happy he wasn't sitting around with a bunch of fat, old American expatriates, and he'd rather be home with his Danish wife. Well, in the first place, the American Club, as I said, was 95% Danes. They had jobs with American companies. So he wouldn't have been with fat old Americans. Then he said he would rather be with his Danish wife, but he left her less than a year later and married some young girl. Things that go around come around. When I left my post, the foreign minister had a lunch for me. He had about 30 people there, businessmen, and others. In his remarks, he said, "Now, it's my understanding that Ambassador Brown is not going back to Lake Wobegon!" Very funny!

Q: You said you had a couple things to mention about Garrison Keillor. The reason we are talking about this is that he is a radio personality of considerable repute, at the time we are talking, so this is not a minor figure.

BROWN: Well, one of the things I recall, which seems to me was indicative of the whole controversy, was that when we had the celebration at Rebild I read President Bush's speech, which was in praise of Denmark's participation in the coalition, the victory, in the Gulf War. I then made my personal remarks - in Danish - which I had done twice before at Rebild celebrations. The Danish Prince made his remarks, which were along the same line. The Danish

speaker was a man named Bertel Haarder, the minister of agriculture, I think. He was very, very outspoken as to how proud and happy they were. (Several days later, Secretary Haarder wrote me: "My remarks on the Gulf would have been stronger had I known Mr. Keillor's intentions.) Finally, came Garrison Keillor, who made these stupid remarks, I thought. They were very inappropriate and out of place, and not in very good taste. When he replied after my letter, he said, "Three of the four speakers celebrated the Gulf War, and the victory, and I decided while I was talking, that somebody should point out that there was a terrible disaster, and it shouldn't have happened." That was in his reply. It was such a lie. The fact is his speech was printed, and we had copies of it prior to the time he delivered it. He delivered it pretty much word for word. So all those awful remarks he had written long before he got up to talk. I had not seen the speech before, but my PAO officer had. He came running up to me later and said, "Look, we had this speech." I said, "I wish you had let me know." At any rate, I thought that he arrived in Denmark with this chip on his shoulder. As I mentioned, he was hardly civil when he came to my residence for a reception. He refused to come aboard the Navy ship, which every speaker had always done. It was part of the ceremony of the Rebild celebration. So I won't dwell on it anymore, but I just felt that it was a very ugly event. I have been asked whether I was glad I wrote the letter. I said, "If I hadn't written that letter, if I hadn't protested, I wouldn't have been able to live with myself the rest of my life."

What happened was the Danish television had pictures of the American flag, and our Navy men standing at attention, saluting as the flag was being raised. Then they cut right into Garrison Keillor's remarks. Then they cut right back, showing everybody standing, singing "The Star Spangled Banner." It was a very negative show. If they hadn't made such an issue of it, I probably would have let it pass, but I couldn't. Then there were headlines in the papers.

Q: Well, now, you've talked about some of the other things. For example, I think it is interesting to look at what happened when you had to "downsize" the embassy. In other words, get rid of people. In the first place, there is a background of why we were doing this.

BROWN: I went to the states for Christmas with my family in 1990. I returned near the end of January of 1991. When I returned, the first thing we did was meet in the embassy. I found out that Denmark had assigned body guards, and a back-up car. The whole world had changed, because of the Gulf War. From then on, I was like a prisoner. I have always felt pity since then for people who have to live with body guards, and under that kind of surveillance. You can't go to the bathroom, hardly. In any event, we then had the queen's visit in February 1981, which I mentioned already. We came back from that and there was a great celebration. The war was ending. In fact, it ended about two days after the queen's visit. Immediately, the State Department went on a campaign, or program, that said, "We must cut back. Our budgets are being cut back." Congress did cut our budgets back, and they continue to this day. So we started receiving this advice from State, but it wasn't very specific. We kept saying, "Well now, give us the parameters. What do we have to live with?" Initially, after several months, we thought it looked like we might be able to RIF five Foreign Service nationals. So, we prepared for that, and we worked with them. I met with the Foreign Service nationals, and I talked with them on several occasions. We had discussions. We tried to get them ready, although they were very unhappy. Then it really got difficult and they sent budget people over. It wasn't just our embassy, it was the same everywhere. The ambassador in Rome threatened to quit twice. He had to close

down two consulates. He said when the president visited he had to walk him in the rain because he couldn't get a car. He was angry about it. He wrote a devastating cable. But all of us were up in arms. Our Greek ambassador was terribly upset. I'm trying to point out how awful this was, because it came so suddenly. We got criticized in the inspection report because they said we didn't plan ahead. We tried to point out to them that we were getting contrary messages. I would have to say that it was very poorly handled by the State Department, in my book. That was true because every embassy in Europe felt the same way.

Q: Secretary Baker had made the decision not to ask for extra money when the Soviet Union collapsed, and you ended up with something like 12 new embassies or something like that.

BROWN: I don't know whether Secretary Baker asked for more money or not, but we didn't get extra money.

Q: That was taken out of the European budget.

BROWN: We just divided the pie up with more participants. It meant that everybody had to give in. In hindsight, I can't argue with it a bit. But I think the way they handled it was unfortunate. They should have sent somebody to every embassy and said, "Look, here's what is happening with your budget." Instead, they kept saying, "Well, we're going to try to keep you at a very good level." It backfired terribly. We ended up having to RIF 12 Foreign Service nationals. It was a real blow. We could do it, but you can't do all the services any longer. We had too many detachments. We had a Greenland detachment that did nothing but buy supplies for Greenland. That was four people. Administratively, you have to serve all those people. It is a real bind. We were working until 10:00 at night; our administrative office was, trying to get every little detail done. That was an unfortunate thing, near the end of my tour. Well, it started in about the summer of my last year and it went on almost to the end. I already mentioned that we did reduce the military eventually. It happened after I left, but I started it all. The General in charge was very upset about that. He sent me a cable saying, "Why couldn't you have waited. Now, this is going to have to be fought in Washington." It was friendly. He said, "Keith, why didn't you wait?" I wrote back and said, "Jim, I've been waiting for months for you to respond to this, and you kept saying no we can't do it, so I had to move. I'm leaving here, and I had to move on it." During the Gulf War, when they were bombing, it looked like we were winning. The troops from Iraq were moving back toward Baghdad.

Q: What was the feeling in Denmark?

BROWN: We saw on TV a lot of our planes, with the Iraq troops being strafed on the ground. At that time the head of the Diplomatic Corps, the Dean, was a Moroccan named Ambassador Omar Belcora. He asked me to come to his residence and meet with him. He was a very good friend. When I got there, he was very uptight. I could tell he was mad. He started in a tirade. We had cookies to eat and he was spitting the cookies on me, literally. He was so upset. He said, "You are killing innocent Islam people." It sounds a little familiar today, does it not? He said, "This is genocide." He just threw everything at me. He was the Dean of the Corps from Morocco. This was in early February. He said, "You have to stop, stop." He screamed the "stop" at me. I made notes of that. He said, "The casualties are so unfair, unreal, and shouldn't happen." Well, I sent a

cable back on that, but it sort of fell into place with what George Bush, Colin Powell, and all of them finally decided, which was, we couldn't pursue it all the way to Baghdad. We weren't going to be an occupying force; we were trying to restore Kuwait to its government. We had accomplished that. But, as you know, for the last several years there has been lots of criticism about stopping the war so suddenly. I just wanted to add that I saw it first-hand with the Moroccan ambassador, the Dean. He was very upset.

Another big event. We had two different sessions with Secretary Baker. The first one was very early in 1989. I mention this because it was important for my career, I guess. He visited all NATO countries. It was a very whirlwind trip. He came in in the morning, and left late afternoon. The protocol called for me to meet the plane and to escort him to the foreign ministry. The foreign minister, who I was just getting to know, said, "It is our country. I will meet the Secretary of State, and he will ride with me." I wanted to ride with Jim Baker, because I wanted to find out what was going to happen about my confirmation. We finally made a compromise. The foreign minister took him, rode with him in the car to the foreign ministry, and I rode with him when we went back to the plane. I remember saying, "Jimmy, what's going to happen? I need to know. I hope I'm going to stay." He said, "The President and I have been talking about you. You're going to stay pal, don't worry about it." That was a very happy moment for me. Even though I felt I was going to stay, the pressure was there.

Q: Also, it's interesting that the Bush taking over from the Reagan administration, although Bush had been Vice President under Reagan for eight years, it was closer to an almost hostile thing.

BROWN: I can comment on it. At the time I had that very discussion I was just relating to you, with Baker, he said, "There is only one or two of you who are going to stay." I said, "Really?" He said, "All the rest are Reagan appointments, they aren't ours. Everybody is going to go, but you are going to stay." I don't know who else might have stayed. I was relieved.

Q: I can imagine. It was not that friendly a takeover, in a way, the way it developed.

BROWN: The second trip where Baker visited us, was the North Atlantic Council, NATO. He was here for about three days. I tried to get him and his wife, Susan, to come stay with us. My wife had written him. He said that it gets so hectic with people dropping in and out who want to visit with you, the hotel is the best place. But we did have a very outstanding meeting. I particularly enjoyed it, because I was in on every session. An ambassador doesn't get too many times, in today's diplomatic world, to get in on what is going on. You get cables and you can watch it on CNN, which is better than the cables you get. On the queen's visit, the foreign minister was taken to the White House, and we met with Brent Scowcroft and with Jim Baker and Bob Zoellick and three or four others. I was present and the Danish ambassador was present. I took notes from that and I found it very exciting because I was in a strategy or very high-level meeting. We don't get that very often anymore in our diplomatic service. I can remember some things they said at that meeting that were really exciting and stunning to me. I shouldn't go into them, but I was excited.

The queen was taken into the White House after the ceremonies in the Rose Garden, where the president and the queen made their remarks. Then pretty much the same group was taken into the

green room at the White House. The president and the queen sat and visited. As you know, under the constitutional monarchy, the queen doesn't comment on foreign policy or foreign questions. It is always the foreign minister. At the National Press Club half the questions were on policy. Of course she would turn and smile and the foreign minister would get up and answer them. I should probably mention that as I prepared for this oral history, I went through my diaries, my office diary, and my personal diary, that I kept also. It was amazing to me the appointments, every hour of the day, the meetings and such. I just can't believe I was physically able to do it. I'm sure that's the case with every ambassador. You have all these courtesy calls. You have different people who are in town, from the State Department, or Washington. It is never ending. At the same time, from my personal diary, I was able to notice that we had some wonderful social events. We did a lot of bird shooting with Danish friends. I was invited to shoot with some American groups that came over. Carol and I played bridge with some of the diplomatic corps and Danish friends. So, what I'm saying is it is an extremely busy, hardworking job, but I enjoyed it thoroughly. I think almost everybody I know enjoyed their service. You also have some wonderful rewarding times that are social. Some of the ceremonies you attend are outstanding. You look back and think, "Did I really get to participate in those events? Was I really sitting in the White House, chatting with the president, and with the queen?"

I guess to sum it up, I would say the three years were probably the most exciting three years that I have ever had. I do have one other incident I wanted to comment on. We had notice that Colonel Lyday of the ODC, the Office of Defense Cooperation, was being offered a command. I think it was at a post in Arizona, or somewhere, in the Air Corps. He was a lieutenant colonel. He was very excited about it. We had a little reception for him and his wife. Then, out of the blue, his office command came back and said, "No, we aren't going to release him from his duties in Denmark," which as I already mentioned, I didn't think were too strenuous anyway because they were too overstaffed. They were devastated. It just so happened that at that very moment, practically, I got a call from General Jim McCarthy, in Ramstein, I guess it was.

Q: Air Force base.

BROWN: Yes, Air Force. It was about the matter of combining, or merging the different military things. But, at that moment, I thought it was my chance to speak up. So, I said, "Jim, I have to tell you something," and I related what had happened. I said, "I'm going to send a cable. I'm very upset. I think somebody in your chain of command is taking it out on Lyday, probably because of what I'm doing, in trying to merge the military up here. I just feel that it is so unfair to this man and his family, because he has earned this. McCarthy said, "Let me understand this. He is now going to have his first command? He was put up for this command, his first one?" I said, "Yes." He said, "We are standing in his way?" I said, "Yes." He said, "You don't have to send a cable, I've handled it right this minute. Colonel Lyday is going on that assignment, and I'll take care of it." I said, "I appreciate it. You are doing a great thing for him." Of course, the Lydays came by, and she was sobbing she was so happy. I remember I put in my diary that this was probably one of the most fulfilling, although not a big tremendous thing, it was probably one of the most fulfilling, happiest things I did as ambassador while I was there for three years. I saved a man's career, I think.

Q: This is terribly important. The fact that you were able, and had the thought to do that. You left when?

BROWN: In January of 1992. I left after this unbelievable 1991, with the queen's visit, the Garrison Keillor episode, the "RIFing." As I say, it seemed like all the monumental things happened. Then, the inspection team. I'll comment on the inspection team. I wouldn't say I got high marks; we got good marks. They pointed out two or three things I was doing; particularly the merger of the military was "visionary" on the Ambassador's part. I think it was a long time overdue. But, they commented on areas where we probably should have been more on the ball, in mostly budget matters. One of them was, in order to save money, we were told we should have "RIFed" or fired the gardener at the residence. I got to thinking about it. The residence is about three and a half acres. It has a swimming pool, and a tennis court, and formal gardens. We had one gardener. I was trying to think what that place would look like if I had important VIP guests, as we did, and receptions out by the pool, and Fourth of July, over the whole estate, if we hadn't had a gardener. These are little things you pick on, I guess. There is no way you could run that residence without a gardener. We had some of the household staff out there helping out occasionally. All and all, inspection was a big experience for me. My wife was back in the states at the time. They were there for about 12 days. I suppose I was with them about 50% of the time while they were there. It was a very enlightening experience, to go deep into some of these things. This was near the end of my term, but one of the things they were talking about had been going on for 10 years. You point that out, and they would tell you that you've been in charge for three years and you should have changed that. The inspection was a great experience. All in all, nobody was hurt. I think it was worthwhile for me to go through it. I asked if we could have the summing up at a breakfast meeting, because I was due to leave at noon to join my wife in the states. They did that and I got to go back and join my family on a family vacation.

The end of the show, I guess, is we made a round of Denmark. We went to two or three different islands off Jutland, which is the big peninsula, and called on a lot of our Danish friends and Danish officials that we had met through the three years. I thought it was worthwhile and enjoyable to more or less say farewell to them all. There was a usual round of parties and dinners. I already mentioned the foreign minister had a wonderful stag luncheon for me. Then it all came to an end. We left there on the 16th of January, and the embassy people all saw me off at the airport. My wife and I got on the plane and took off and I started sobbing. It was the most moving thing in the world to me. I couldn't believe it was over. It had been so fulfilling and so busy and, all of a sudden, it seemed to end. I came back to Washington and did my signing out. It's interesting, I talked with a lot of my Republican friends, and I said, "I'm back, I'm free, and I'll be happy to help." They said, "Oh, Bush is so popular, and he is so far ahead, there is no need for you to worry about that." I went back to Denver, shaking my head, saying, "These guys don't understand what is going on." By that time, Bush's popularity had fallen. We were in a recession and they wouldn't really acknowledge it. It was a revelation to me.

I should say, before I left, I asked Lord Chamberlain for a farewell visit to the queen, which was arranged. Of course she awarded me, as she does almost every ambassador who doesn't embarrass the country, the Grand Cross of the Dannebrog, which is the equivalent to a knighthood in the British Empire. So, I have that to wear with my white tie. I also had a big

ceremony and farewell at the American Club, where they presented me with a plaque of appreciation. I had the usual things, I guess, every ambassador who leaves a post goes through.

GREGORY L. MATTSON
Deputy Chief of Mission
Copenhagen (1993-1996)

Mr. Mattson was born in about 1940 and graduated from Georgetown University. His Foreign Service career included Lisbon, Nairobi, Seychelles, Athens and Copenhagen. He was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 2000.

Q: Then where did you go from there, from Washington?

MATTSON: From Washington I thought I would be going to Lisbon as DCM. I had had a previous assignment in Lisbon, and I was the EUR candidate for Lisbon. This was a period when the European bureau thought it had the major voice in DCM positions because there were a lot of vacancies coming along, with no ambassador in place. So my name went forward as EUR's choice to the DCM committee. I, along with five or six other prospective EUR-designated DCMs, were, however, unceremoniously shunted aside in favor of higher priority candidates, all of whom were women. So I thought I was going to a job that I was very much looking forward to - and was well prepared for - and now was without a landing spot. I had to scramble fast. I heard that Copenhagen DCM had not quite been settled and managed to get an interview with then Ambassador Stone, former Democratic senator from Florida, who, through a change of affiliation on his part, remarkably became a Republican appointed ambassador in Denmark. When he was in Washington, I had an interview, actually a very long interview, about an hour and a half with the desk officer taking copious notes of my responses to eight very serious questions that Ambassador Stone had carefully prepared. They were penetrating and difficult questions. But I managed to get his approval, so instead of going to Lisbon, where I thought I was going, I received an assignment to Copenhagen. Not going to Lisbon in 1993 adversely affected my career, however, because of the difficult time I had with Ambassador Elson in Denmark.

Q: And that was your first experience in northern Europe. You didn't have Danish. Maybe that didn't matter.

MATTSON: Well, I went to FSI for a few weeks of Danish, but it really didn't matter, that's right. In fact, I always felt sorry for the officers in the embassy who took Danish, because Danish is a language which is fairly easy to read but is almost impossible for a foreigner to pronounce, unlike Swedish or Norwegian. So it was a very frustrating experience for language designated officers. I remember one of them had received a grade of three in Danish after 20 weeks and on his first day in Copenhagen went to the train station and in his best Danish said, "I'd like a ticket to" whatever the town was, and the man responded, "Please, just speak in English." Virtually all Danes speak excellent English, and none of the Americans was able to properly pronounce

Danish. But a couple of weeks of Danish was useful in terms of getting a little bit of an orientation and a feel for the written language.

Q: Was Ambassador Stone still there?

MATTSON: He was there.

Q: This was early in the Clinton Administration, the summer of 1993?

MATTSON: Exactly. As a former senator from Florida, a Democrat, Stone still had some friends back in the Senate, so he was able - I think maybe uniquely - to stay much longer than is the norm when administrations change. He was able to stay until December of 1993 through, I think, the good auspices of former Senator Metzenbaum and others who lobbied the White House to enable their former colleague to stay on. So I had about six months, six very positive months, with Ambassador Stone.

Q: You were doing primarily kind of traditional political ambassador/career DCM work, kind of running the day-to-day of the embassy primarily?

MATTSON: Yes. During that period when Ambassador Stone was there, I spent a fair amount of time getting familiar with the scene. But it was a traditional DCM role with the political ambassador. He was, of course, moving toward the end of his time there and focusing on a couple of legacy items, especially relating to the 1943 escape from Nazi-occupied Denmark of Danish Jews. Beyond that he left the operations of the embassy to me.

Q: In contrast to Greece, relations with Denmark are pretty smooth, not quite as many challenges, and the question of profile probably doesn't come up to the same extent. Why don't you talk a little bit about the general framework of the relationship in that early period?

MATTSON: Of course, as you say, we have a very strong relationship with Denmark. We always have. It was not entirely without issues, however. One perennial issue was our base at Thule in Greenland, northern Greenland. We have had a checkered history in Greenland. The major political issue that occurred during the time I was there was the admission that we had routinely overflowed Greenland with nuclear-armed bombers during the Cold War, something that we had told the Danes at the time we were not doing. And then there was a lot of residue from the crash of a B-52 on the Greenland icecap, which was carrying four nuclear weapons. This was in the early 1950s, and people were coming forward with various illnesses and claims, and that made for a lot of very difficult negotiations and bad press. Then we had the ongoing problem of compensation for the Greenlanders for our presence at Thule, whether this was in terms of the number of Greenlanders who would be employed at the base or alleged misdeeds relating to Greenlandic villages, Inuit villages which were close to the base. But one thing in our favor was that the Danish government maintains a control over foreign and security matters for Greenland that actually sticks. While the Greenlanders would be present at our every-six-month bilateral meeting, they were kept in check in terms of those issues. Of course, Denmark subsidizes Greenland to the tune of, I think, about \$500,000,000 a year for these 60,000 Inuits, so they do have a lot of influence over things in Greenland. Greenland was something that was

always, even on the back burner, rearing its head. We also had a serious issue at the time with trade matters, especially related to environmental factors, things like genetically modified organisms in the form of various grains and feed corn which Monsanto was attempting to move into Europe. The Danes, of course, were very much opposed to that. But overall we had a very harmonious, comfortable relationship with the Danes. It was a pleasure, really, to work with the Danish foreign ministry, for all of us in the embassy, because we had access and they were knowledgeable about their portfolios and they were able to actually articulate the governmental position. And this was in sharp contrast, for example, to Greece, where you would be very hard pressed to get any sort of an authoritative statement out of anyone below a minister in Athens. In Denmark, a young deputy office director would be able to give you precisely the government's position on Issue X within their portfolio. That certainly streamlined reporting and made communication with Washington very timely and productive.

Q: A lot of these trade issues certainly were European Union issues that Denmark played an important role in as a member state of Europe. So you were in a sense lobbying for U.S. positions that then might not take fruition until the meeting in Brussels?

MATTSON: Correct, and all of the U.S. embassies in member countries were doing the same thing. We just found it a little bit tougher sledding than many of them because of the rigid position that the Danes took against genetically modified organisms and on various other environmental issues. Sven Auken - I remember now - was a hard-left minister in the government of Prime Minister Rasmussen, and his control over the environmental portfolio was near-absolute and very much against all kinds of issues that we wanted to move along.

Q: I suppose on other issues Denmark, as a small country that does a lot of trade, exporting as well as importing, sometimes would be on our side, wouldn't they, as opposed to another country that might have a more protectionist attitude on the matter?

MATTSON: In terms of free trade, that's absolutely true. And the Danes, amazing for a small country, are the fourth largest food exporter in the world, which is truly striking. It's such a tiny country. In fact, any Dane that you meet, with typical modesty, will tell you a couple of things about their country: it's a small country, it's an insignificant country, and it rains a lot. But, of course, it was a great empire at one time and is a very admirable country. There's an expression that I heard in Scandinavia which is kind of interesting. It describes the perfect Nordic economic unit. The Finns design a product, the Swedes manufacture it, and the Danes sell it, and the Norwegians buy it. That would be addressing the strengths of each of those societies. Certainly, the Danes were very skilled in mercantile activities.

Q: How about the NATO issues? Did that take up a lot of your time in the period, particularly this early period that you were there?

MATTSON: During that period we were working the issues around ex-Yugoslavia. The Danes, for the first time really in a century, sent their armed forces abroad. They sent a tank unit to Bosnia which actually engaged a Bosnian Serb unit at one point. There were some fatalities on the Serb side. This was the first time that shots had been fired in anger by Danes since the Second World War. They also dispatched a small naval vessel to the Persian Gulf. So Denmark

was becoming a little less pacifist, if you will, and a little more engaged with security issues. They still had a very small military establishment, but that military establishment was beginning to be used in ways that the alliance would approve of, this for the first time. I remember reading that in the 1950s there was public debate about what Denmark should do - and Denmark, of course, was a NATO member - in the event of a Soviet attack in Europe. It was proposed in parliament that the Danish defense budget consist of no money whatsoever and one recorded message which was "We surrender." That was the prevailing attitude in the '50s in many quarters. But by the early 1990s, they were beginning to, as I say, assert themselves. We were also quite involved with upgrading their forces. They had F-16s, and during the time that I was there we worked very hard to get them to buy the AAMRAM, which was a sophisticated air-to-air missile, much more sophisticated than the Sparrow or the Sidewinder. And they were, I think, the first country in the alliance to actually be equipped - or maybe with the Dutch - with this weapon. So they were upgrading their military, and again were using it in ways that the alliance would strongly approve of. Plus, the Danes were taking a very active role in the Baltic States. The new Baltic countries were sort of divvied up among the Danes, the Swedes and the Finns in terms of support. The Danes had involvement, I believe, in all three but their strongest focus, I think, was in Lithuania. The Swedes, I know, were primarily involved in Estonia. But there was a lot of activity relating to the Baltics. Then during the time that I was there, we undertook an initiative, because of the geography - it was kind of an interesting experiment - for Copenhagen to be the hub embassy for other activities, U.S. Government activities, in the Nordic/Baltic region. For example, we established an EST officer, Environment Science and Technology officer, under OES (Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science) and that position was based in Copenhagen with coverage over the Baltics and the Nordics. There was also a Legal (FBI Legal attaché) office set up with coverage through the area. So we kind of took the lead in establishing Copenhagen as a regional center for activities which would not justify a person in place in each capital.

Q: How were Denmark's relations with its sort of immediate neighbors in the period you mentioned, the Baltic States, Germany, Sweden?

MATTSON: Those are two large countries that are close by and with which the Danes had bad relations in the past. I guess one of the worst things you can do is to pronounce Denmark's capital the way the Germans pronounce it; they don't like that at all. Of course, there was a lot of resentment over the loss of territories in the 19th century and then the occupation of Denmark during the war, although in comparison with others it was a far less harsh occupation than, for example, even in Norway. Although the Danes do not wish to acknowledge the point, the Nazis viewed Denmark as "a model protectorate" for several years and, if I recall correctly, the first resistance casualty did not occur until 1943. Sweden is Denmark's historic rival in the Baltics. The average Dane did not particularly care for the inhabitants of either of its larger neighbors. They got along much better with the Norwegians than they did with the Swedes or the Germans. The bridge which now connects Sweden and Denmark, the Oresund Bridge, was being talked about as a project but it was not underway then. In fact, now, I think, it's very interesting, because the southern part of Sweden, which was historically part of the Danish kingdom, even when there was a separate Swedish kingdom based on Stockholm, is probably going to become much more oriented toward Copenhagen with this bridge and with the various satellite industries that will be created between Copenhagen and, let's say, Malmo and Lund in southern Sweden.

Q: I'd like to talk just a little bit more about how Denmark at the time you were there saw its role in the world. You mentioned that they dispatched forces to Bosnia and so on under NATO. I seem to remember in the early '80s that Denmark had, I think, a small contingent of volunteers also in Cyprus as part of the United Nations peacekeeping force. I guess I always think of Denmark as being a staunch supporter of the United Nations idea, peacekeeping, aid, although there they tend to focus on a few recipients. Is that right? How do they see themselves in sort of a broader world horizon?

MATTSON: You're right, and I should have mentioned that earlier. They were always very much in the forefront of UN peacekeeping, and they furnished peacekeeping troops, I think, maybe even in the Congo back in the 1960s. They thought they were very good at peacekeeping, and they were. They had a very good school for peacekeeping where their soldiers would be sent for training, and a large portion of their military was always deployed overseas as peacekeepers in Cyprus, the Middle East, and in other places. They had various army officers in places like Georgia in the former Soviet Union. And they were always very much involved, of course, in foreign aid. They were striving for one percent of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) to be given in foreign aid, and it was either between them or the Swedes as to which country actually was the biggest proportionate assistance giver in the world. I think right now Denmark is in first place with 1.0 and Sweden has dropped down to .9 percent. The foreign ministry was structured in an interesting way. You had a north group and a south group. The north group was involved in traditional diplomatic relations with its various directorates dealing with Europe and NATO and the United States and so forth, and the south group was essentially an AID (Agency for International Development) operation supporting Danida. This Danish aid organization populated this south group with officers who were very often from other ministries or who became career aid people. They did not come along the traditional diplomatic track. Danish embassies which are present in countries other than the major countries are usually staffed by an ambassador who is from the south group, not a traditional diplomat. Danes tend to open and close embassies in the developing world depending on whether or not they have a significant aid project going on in that particular place. It's true that they focused on some countries, but they moved that focus around to a certain extent. They always had a stronger concentration in Africa than anywhere else. Perhaps you had the experience in Ghana of a Danish embassy with an aid official as ambassador.

Q: Yes, I think in both Ghana and Tanzania, too, as I recall. I think they and some of the other Scandinavians have always thought that Tanzania was particularly worthy of support and programs. Let's come back a minute to Greenland. You said there was a meeting every six months between the United States and Denmark to talk about Greenland?

MATTSON: Well, political-military issues in general, but they tended to boil down to the state of relations at Thule and various construction projects that were ongoing. We had to seek Danish approval for road building and various other projects, and this gave the Greenlanders the opportunity to weigh in with their concerns directly with us. This was something that had been established, the political-military consultations, for some time, and they were alternately held in Washington and in Copenhagen.

Q: When they were held in Copenhagen, the embassy would do it, some people from Washington?

MATTSON: Yes.

Q: They were never held in Greenland itself?

MATTSON: After I left, one meeting was going to be held in Greenland, which would have, of course, been appropriate.

Q: You did not get to Greenland yourself?

MATTSON: No, unfortunately. My travel orders, blanket travel orders, included an annual trip to Greenland. Of course, the wonderful thing about going to Greenland is that after visiting Thule - and that would, of course, have been very worthwhile - you would call on government officials in Nuuk, the capital, which is in southern Greenland, and that's very close to the fjords and Jakobshavn, Jacob's Harbor, which is one of the great natural wonders of the world. But, the ambassador didn't want me to go; he considered it as his own preserve. I never got to exercise my blanket travel orders.

Q: Maybe we should move ahead and talk about what happened after Ambassador Stone left. I think you said that was December of '93.

MATTSON: Yes, and his successor, Ambassador Edward Elson, arrived two days later, maybe three days later. It was actually quite an interesting experience for me to preside over the departure of one ambassador on day certain with the arrival of his successor imminent. There was a lot of coordination work to be done there. Ambassador Stone, who was an effective ambassador - the Danes liked him very much; he had a very low-key, self-effacing manner which the Danes very much appreciated - had been there just two years and he was very comfortable. In fact, he still goes back to Denmark every summer for a month, rents a house north of Copenhagen, and has a lot of Danish friends. So he was not quite ready to leave. Ambassador Elson was very anxious to arrive, so it was the predictable sort of back-and-forth on establishing various travel dates. That occurred in December. Ambassador Elson was from Atlanta, was very prominent in Democratic activities as a supporter and heavy contributor. He had acquired a large fortune from various newsstands in airports, hotels, train stations and that sort of thing, which he then sold to W. H. Smith in London. He spent a lot of time in London; had homes in Florida, New York, London and Atlanta. Elson was there for the rest of my tour, essentially two and a half years.

Q: You really were not chosen by him. Ambassador Stone had interviewed you and selected you to be DCM.

MATTSON: Correct. What happened was that he was already in the pipeline to go to Denmark. I met with him before I went to Denmark. He seemed to like me and my wife. The Office of Nordic/Baltic Affairs was very supportive of my continuing on in that job. I don't think Ambassador Elson gave very much thought to looking around for someone else.

Q: Well, the fact that he had met you probably should have helped. He knew who you were, even if you didn't have too much contact.

MATTSON: Exactly.

Q: So how did things work with him those next two and a half years? He was a different kind of ambassador.

MATTSON: He was. He was an extremely charming, very humorous person. You learn a great deal from people from other walks of life; I certainly learned a lot from him. He was a very good public speaker. He was kind of unpresupposing physically. He used that somewhat to his advantage and was just extremely good in social situations and again had just a wonderful sense of humor. I remember one story which he mentioned publicly - and maybe I should throw it out here; it's kind of worthwhile: He was at a dinner party just a couple of months after he arrived. The Danes are known to be very direct in their remarks. This woman was seated next to him - he told me this story the next day in the embassy and subsequently, as I say, told it to others - and the woman said, "Tell me, Ambassador, do you like being here in Denmark?" and he was somewhat perplexed but he said, "Well, I told her, of course: 'The Danes are wonderful and caring and considerate and concerned, and the country's lovely and so green and so nice, and so forth.'" He was going on extolling the virtues of Denmark and the Danes when she abruptly cut in and said, "So tell me, did you have to pay a lot of money for this job?" He was taken aback by that remark and replied, "Madame, let's look at it this way: I'm not in London and I'm not in Rome and I'm not in Paris. I'm sitting here in Denmark having dinner with you. How much money could I have paid?" He was unusual to say the least. Whereas Ambassador Stone was sort of deliberately low key, Elson came with a Bentley. He had both a Rolls Royce and a Bentley. He asked me which of these vehicles he should bring, and I said, "Well, I don't think you should bring either one of them, because the only Rolls [Royces] and Bentleys in the country are in the royal household." He said, "I think I'll bring the Bentley." So he would travel around Copenhagen in the Bentley. The Danes, of course, got sort of a kick out of that. He gave wonderful dinner parties and was enjoying himself tremendously. He had many experiences in his life, I'm sure, but I don't think he ever did anything that he enjoyed more than being ambassador to Denmark.

Q: And how did he interact with the rest of the embassy, and how did he see your role?

MATTSON: Actually, I'd have to break my time with him into various periods. The first year and a half were very productive as he settled in and got acquainted with the issues. Later things became less harmonious. Unfortunately, he was of a type of political ambassador, and he is not alone in this regard who has, even before they arrive at a post, a visceral antipathy toward the State Department. The State Department for many of these people - and I don't know whether it was someone in the Clinton White House who feeds them this sort of thing - these individuals come out thinking of the State Department as sort of a rival operation and an organization that is inclined to say "No" too often with respect to budgetary issues. He, for example, had a tremendous back-and-forth over a replacement vehicle for a Cadillac that had seen better days. He was not going to accept, for example, what the State Department was offering all posts, an upgraded Chevrolet. The idea of him traveling in a Chevrolet was so beyond the pale that he

spent about six months with a rented BMW while the State Department tried to sort out if they could possibly satisfy him with something else. He was going to have a Lincoln Town Car or nothing else. Of course, the State Department was saying "No." He's insistent, he's the ambassador, he's a big contributor to the Clinton-Gore campaign, he knows Terry McAuliffe and he knows Peter Knight and he knows all of these insiders, and he's not going to take "No" for an answer. Plus, as an entrepreneur with his own business, he wasn't accustomed to people saying "No" to him. He was actually not the only Clinton appointee who fell into this category. I think one of the more unfortunate aspects of the political appointment process is that the White House does not instruct an ambassador to respect and to try to work harmoniously with the State Department rather than to regard it as some sort of a hostile organization, an organization to be resisted. So the fundamental problem was that we had a situation where he didn't care for the State Department and I was regarded as the representative, the senior representative, of the State Department. He often wanted to show his disdain for the State Department by playing one group off against another and trying to work directly with other agencies at post without coordination with me or State.

Q: He worked with the heads of other agencies at post directly rather than expecting you to coordinate?

MATTSON: Exactly. That developed as a pattern during the last year of our time together, and that proved to be very, very difficult. He also was a person who thought that a mild misstep would qualify a person for a curtailment. So basically there was an intensifying battle throughout the time that I was there. After the first six months, there were about 10 or 12 instances when he wanted to curtail four or five different people, sometimes they were repeat candidates, but he was very determined that staff should be sent home for minor misdeeds. I was successfully resistant to that, and so that also was a problem area for us. The only curtailment that occurred while I was there was of the information officer, and that was done in the dead of night directly with USIA. I was made aware of it after the fact.

Q: So you really didn't have a chance to resist that?

MATTSON: Right.

Q: Was he suspicious in general, not just maybe of you as representative of the Department of State but of other Foreign Service personnel who came from the Department of State as well, or you took the brunt of that connection?

MATTSON: I tried to act to a certain extent as a buffer. But, given his attitude, the administrative section would always come in for a lot of criticism because there were certain things that he wanted, and these involved large sums of money, large expenditures whether it was at the residence or with his vehicle. Some of these things were the Department's fault; they should have insisted that he not be allowed to rent, for example, a BMW. I forget exactly, but that item cost 20,000 or 30,000 dollars in lease costs, for nothing. I tried, to the extent possible, to protect the State Department staff, for lack of a better word, or at least to let them know that they had someone in me who was not going to pile on in terms of his dealings with them. Unlike me, he is still in the Service on active duty. He was a very demanding and difficult person and

was not inclined to accept anything other than a quick salute to carry out his orders. I understand my successor had a different, more compliant approach toward Elson.

Q: Did he try to get rid of you for resisting these things?

MATTSON: Not to my knowledge. We actually had a very unusual and interesting relationship. We saw each other throughout the day every day whether our relationship was good or bad. He was somewhat older than I was. Actually, I think one side of him liked me a great deal, because I kind of always noticed where he was headed with his three-angle bank-shot approaches to life. So one side of him liked me a lot; he felt that I had street smarts, was effective and that sort of thing and was not very bureaucratic. His approach, essentially a zero sum game where for him to win everyone else had to lose, kept everyone on tenterhooks and morale was low.

Q: This is the 5th of April 2001. We're talking about his assignment from 1993 to 1996 as deputy chief of mission in Copenhagen, which we discussed at some length when we last got together almost two months ago. Greg, I think we were talking about your relations with the chief of mission. I think you were with just one ambassador, or was there more than one? I think you had talked a little bit about some of the problems, but maybe you want to finish up on that.

MATTSON: Just to recap for a moment, I was actually offered the position as DCM by Ambassador Elson's predecessor, Ambassador Stone. Ambassador Elson was his successor, arriving about six months after I arrived in Copenhagen, and we spent the next two and a half years together. As I've mentioned, he was a very intelligent, very charming, interesting person. I had contact with the political appointees at European posts, and many of these shared some not altogether laudatory characteristics. These individuals - and I met probably five or six of them - were largely motivated by the personal glory aspects of being ambassadors. The notion of service was not, if not tertiary, certainly clearly of secondary concern. They all tended to be competitive with one another in terms of getting more high-level visitors, having more frequent contact with the White House, seeming to have more clout, even competing in the extravagance race, if you will, of the Fourth of July celebrations. All of them basically hit up American businesses which were resident in their countries for large donations. They were, again, very competitive with one another. One individual might say he had 5,000 people in Brussels and someone else would say they had 6,000 people in The Hague and that sort of thing. In any event, Elson was very activist, had a certain hostility toward the State Department. He viewed me as the protector, if you will, of the State officers who were at post, and that put me in an awkward position and frequently we came into conflict. Ours was a mixed relationship because I think intrinsically he rather liked me but institutionally we had some clear differences. In any event, he tended to leave the overall management of a significant number of issues to me. He was very heavily into the Copenhagen social scene and wanted, as he often put it, "to be close to the royals and aristocrats," a phrase that I remember him using quite often. He would spend a lot of time with the "royals and aristocrats," go on shooting weekends with them and that kind of thing. Fortunately, Denmark is an Atlanticist-minded country, looked to the United States as its primary ally, had some ambivalent feelings toward Germany and Sweden, its two large neighbors, but was very close to the United States and American policy. That was manifested in a number of ways, including the establishment of a Danish immigrant museum in Iowa during the time that I was there and in an annual celebration on the Fourth of July at a small town on

Jutland called Rebild. A prominent American would be invited each year. Janet Reno was there one year; Garrison Keeler, the Minnesota radio humorist, was there another year; and Sam Nunn a third year. So every year there would be someone prominent in the hills above this town where there was a small memorial to the ties between Denmark and the United States and extolling Danish immigration. They put on a show composed of musical events and speeches, and usually a member of the royal family would show up. The Danes were, as I say, very cooperative. We did have some tensions because there were some declassified documents coming out concerning the crash in Greenland of a B-52 bomber carrying four nuclear weapons. There was some delicacy because there were a lot of very critical press accounts concerning that incident, possible contamination of workers involved in the clean-up of the nuclear weapons. Two of the bombs apparently were under an ice shelf, and it was a very large undertaking to clean up the residue of that crash. That was sort of the main problem that we had. We also had some issues related to Monsanto and all of the genetically modified organisms and "round-up ready" soybeans and what have you, which we were pushing on the European Union countries both in Brussels and in capitals. We ran into a lot of stiff resistance from the environmentally and genetically pure Danes on that score. But, by and large, we had a very cooperative relationship.

Q: You mentioned the celebration, national celebration, if you will, in Denmark on the Fourth of July. What effect, if any, did that have on the embassy celebration, the ambassador's reception? They had to be coordinated so they didn't take place at the same moment, I suppose.

MATTSON: That was rather complicated. One year the festivities at Rebild took place from early morning to late afternoon. The ambassador managed to host a diplomatic-style reception in the early evening of the Fourth. On other occasions, because that really didn't work too well, we had to have the in-Copenhagen reception for the Fourth of July a day earlier. But Rebild was such an important event in terms of the coverage of the public and also the press that it was a modification we really felt was necessary. There were literally 5,000 to 15,000 people, mostly Danes, but some Danish-Americans would come over every year. Many would arrive from Nebraska or Iowa primarily, and they would plan their summer holidays to be in Denmark at that time.

Q: You mentioned that Ambassador Elson was interested, as were several other political appointees of the Clinton Administration and elsewhere in Europe, in trying to have as many high-level as possible visitors come as evidence of their influence and perhaps the state of good relations between the United States and Denmark. But other than the visit in connection with July Fourth, did you have a Presidential visit or were there other significant visits that took place while you were there?

MATTSON: Janet Reno, as I mentioned was a cabinet officer who came for Rebild. Beyond that, we had Secretary of Defense Perry; we did not have a Secretary of State visit. Both Hilary Clinton and Vice President Gore came to Denmark for the UN's World Summit for Social Development, which took place in 1995. That was a major event, a UN summit. Up until that time it was the largest gathering of world leaders in history. I thought the dictates of protocol were rather interesting because you had all of the tin pot dictators from around the world show up. At the main dinner, which was hosted by Queen Margrethe II, the seating was according to UN protocol, meaning that whoever had been in office the longest had precedence. So, the

Queen of Denmark had at her table only dictators like Castro and Mobutu and several other Africans; I think President Moi from Kenya was also at her table. It was ironic that Denmark, which prides itself on being a democracy of longstanding, was forced to have its queen surrounded by a bunch of thug presidents. So we did have those visits, and there was a bilateral aspect to that in each case, which we exploited, I think, fairly well. Hilary Clinton came early in the week of the summit. There were a bunch of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) there, Bella Abzug and that crowd, and she spent a fair amount of time with them, delivered a major speech, and basically got to see a little bit of Denmark in the process. And then the Vice President came as the official U.S. representative to the summit later in the week and over the weekend.

Q: Okay. Is there anything else we ought to cover talking about the assignment in Denmark, recognizing that the first part of this conversation took place a while ago and there may be a little bit of overlap or maybe some gaps, too?

MATTSON: Yes, there may be some gaps and I may be a little bit repetitive. I would say that one initiative that we had - I'm not sure if we covered it before - was to basically try to make Copenhagen into a regional hub for the rest of Scandinavia and for the Baltic states, the new Baltic countries: Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. We may have covered that, but that was kind of an interesting concept. As you would downsize certain agencies in embassies, you could actually have one person who would cover issues on a regional basis based in Copenhagen. We had a new position from OES, an environmental science officer position established there, which covered mainly the Baltics but also Oslo and Copenhagen and Helsinki. Stephanie Kinney, an outstanding and extremely hard working officer, was the first incumbent and did a fabulous job.

Q: Were there any other agencies that were doing that too?

MATTSON: The FBI also lobbied successfully to establish a two person office there with regional responsibility. The agriculture attaché position sort of flipped back and forth between Stockholm and Copenhagen, with that person covering both countries.

Q: The Baltic States.

MATTSON: No, just between Sweden and Denmark. We had an FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) security presence reporting to Brussels. That individual also had regional responsibilities in Scandinavia. Those were the principal ones. Oh, the naval attaché was also accredited, I think, to Lithuania. But Copenhagen, which has a wonderful international airport and a lot of connections to all of these countries, was ideal from that point of view. Expansion of the U.S. presence also made the Danes feel good. I might just add a postscript on the visitor side. Again, subsequent to my departure there was the first ever Presidential visit to Denmark. It seems strange that there had never been one, but President Clinton was the first sitting president to go, and, of course, Ambassador Elson regarded this as a great personal triumph. He was duly given credit by the Danes. That solidified his position as primus inter pares of ambassadors to Denmark. In point of fact, that visit really had nothing to do with his own efforts. It was a rather interesting story. The sequence was that President Clinton was going to meet with the Soviet leader, Yeltsin, in Helsinki, and it was thought that he should stop over in a Nordic capital en

route. Well, that meeting in Helsinki was canceled. I forget exactly what were the circumstances for that. Then Copenhagen was rescheduled as a separate visit later on at a time that would be convenient. It turned out that Clinton visited there after the June NATO Summit in Madrid - I guess it was 1999. But Denmark was never originally on the radar screen as the place that President Clinton would visit en route to Helsinki. He actually wanted to go to Stockholm. The State Department said, "Well, Sweden is a neutral country. We would rather that you went to a NATO country en route to Helsinki," and the one that they were steering him toward was Oslo, in part because they did not want to have him in Denmark as long as that particular chief of mission was there. His relations with the State Department, at least on the working level, were that bad. But through just sheer luck, President Clinton said, "No, I don't really want to go to Oslo. I want to go to Stockholm, but since I can't go to Stockholm and I don't want to go to Oslo, where else can I go" and Copenhagen was the obvious choice. So that's how he ended up going to Copenhagen, which was a wildly successful visit. They had something like 10,000 or 15,000 people waving Danish and American flags in Town Hall Square. They say it was the largest gathering in Town Hall Square in downtown Copenhagen since the British liberation in 1945.

PATRICIA D. HUGHES
Political/Economic Counselor
Copenhagen (1992-1994)

Mrs. Hughes was born in New York State and educated at Wellesley College and Rutgers University. Commissioned as Foreign Service Officer in 1962 she was required to resign her commission upon marrying. As the wife of a Foreign Service Officer, she accompanied her husband to postings in London, Cape Town and Helsinki. Following changes in regulations she was re-commissioned and served in Prague and Cape Town as Political and Economic Officer, as well as in the Department of State dealing with Personnel matters.

Q: Then to Copenhagen as political officer?

HUGHES: Pol/Econ counselor.

Q: It was a combined political and economic section and you were in charge of both. I have interviewed the DCM at that time, so I know a little bit about and I also have a friend who is with the USIS, Virgil Bodine at the time, so I know a little bit about the embassy at the time. I think it was a difficult period for people working there.

HUGHES: Yes, it was.

Q: Not so much because of the state of U.S. Danish relations.

HUGHES: Denmark was interesting. They had two elections when I was there and they were fine. There was all of the peacekeeping and other things that went on with the Danes that made it an interesting time to be there.

Q: The peacekeeping issue is related to Bosnia at that time for the most part? Kosovo, not yet?

HUGHES: Not yet.

Q: You were sort of coordinating and working with the Danish government on their participation with the United States and also in terms of NATO I suppose in S4 and post Dayton I guess?

HUGHES: Yes, Dayton was June of that last year.

Q: What sort of impression do you have of Danish capabilities in the peacekeeping area; they're, pretty experienced?

HUGHES: They're very experienced and they are an interesting psychological study, which they themselves will tell you about at the drop of a hat. They did not have a glorious war and I think they were trying to make up for it ever since. It wouldn't have made a whole lot of difference because Denmark is flat and it wasn't a Norway.

Q: They wouldn't have been able to defend themselves if they had tried?

HUGHES: No. I can remember my friends asking me to remind me how many Danes, how many Danish soldiers were killed during the invasion. It was something like nine.

Q: During the Second World War?

HUGHES: His response was, "Oh their mothers must have been so annoyed." As a matter of fact, the queen in her 1990 address, which was kind of a big deal because it was the anniversary of the invasion and was also the anniversary of her birthday, said in her address, "All right, enough is enough. You may rejoice. You haven't felt like rejoicing, but you may rejoice." Because, oddly enough, they didn't do all that badly because of how they helped the Jews out. It was only after, if they had not had that experience they probably would have gone along swimmingly for the whole rest of the time. But the resistance only started after the Jews were evacuated.

Q: These were Jews living in Denmark?

HUGHES: Yes. They got them all out practically.

Q: They were able to get them out before they went to Sweden? The Danish army, I don't know anything about. I assume it is good and capable. They have an air force and a navy and all those things?

HUGHES: Yes, they do.

Q: I was in Cyprus in the early '80s and Denmark had a contingent element of the United Nations peacekeeping force there which was small. I believe they were volunteers. In other words, I'm not sure; they basically could stay in Cyprus pretty much as long as they wanted. I

assume they had some training. They wore uniforms, but they were not in any sense, I don't think they were professional soldiers like the British or the Canadians. Does that sound right?

HUGHES: What year was that?

Q: This would have been the early '80s, so it was before the period we're talking about.

HUGHES: Yes. The reason I'm asking is because in the late '70s I remember when the British were being evacuated in Cyprus and the BBC sort of carried news every 15 minutes or so telling people where to go and what port to go to if they had dogs and what port to go to if they didn't have dogs.

Q: That was '74.

HUGHES: It was hairy stuff. We were in Finland then.

Q: But the Danes were very happy to be part of the UN force? At the time I was there, there were only four other countries that were there, the British, the Canadians and two others.

HUGHES: Yes, when I left they probably had the highest percentage of peacekeepers of other than the ...

Q: Before the NATO force went out and then they stayed? They were in a number of other places, the Middle East, probably not in Cyprus anymore because I think they had left by that time. So, you spent a lot of time primarily talking to the foreign ministry or the defense ministry about?

HUGHES: The foreign ministry. The defense ministry had an attaché. Which was fine.

Q: Were there other side issues? You were there not too long after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the changes in Eastern Europe? Were you affected by that much?

HUGHES: Not really. We were extremely busy, in fact, when the president made his very first visit ever to Poland.

Q: That certainly has an impact on an embassy. They brought in a lot of people to help the embassy I suppose?

HUGHES: Yes, they did, but it was not as many as one would hope. We had one person, a fairly junior officer come down from Stockholm and I think one got a very different impression of how other foreign ministries work or can work. The president was supposed to come, let's say in May. He had canceled and the trip had to be rescheduled

Q: This was President Clinton?

HUGHES: President Clinton. There was a great deal of unhappiness because the cancellation was only two days before.

Q: Oh really? All the preparations that had been made?

HUGHES: All the preparations had been made.

Q: So, he came later?

HUGHES: Yes, he did.

Q: After what, a few months?

HUGHES: He promised actually at the time when the trip was canceled that he would come and he did, but I said to the chief of protocol, "Oh golly, this is really going to conflict with the summer." He knew that he and his wife had their vacations all set. I said, "This is really going to mess you up." He said, "No, it's not. We'll go anyway." I said, "What?" He said, "It'll get done, somebody else will do it."

Q: That's exactly what happened?

HUGHES: That's what happened.

Q: That's a good attitude. I wish more people had that.

HUGHES: Yes it is.

Q: But you didn't take your vacation. You were there for the president's visit?

HUGHES: Oh, of course. It was a treat because first of all you have no idea how tall the president is because the queen is over six feet and we're used to seeing her tower over everybody else in the room. She wasn't towering over at all, he towered over her. She's a very charming woman and of course there were so many people. You've been involved in presidential visits, it was my first one, but I had no idea of the number of people that would turn out. I had a driver taking me back into town. I said to the driver, "I haven't seen this many people since the queen's birthday celebration." He just looked at me and said, "We love our queen." And they do.

Q: They also love America? Or they like the United States and the American people?

HUGHES: Yes they do.

Q: And this was reflected in the attitude toward the visit?

HUGHES: I'm not sure, yes it was, it certainly was. The more you are exposed to the sort of visitors; I mean who would have guessed that millions of people would turn out for the queen mother's funeral?

Q: How much contact did you have with the royal family in Denmark?

HUGHES: Well, I was invited to the lunch, I was fortunate enough to be invited to the lunch. That was very nice.

Q: When the president was there?

HUGHES: Yes, because you were announced in and that was kind of scary. I didn't have much contact otherwise. That was really a treat and those of us who were invited felt that it was a tremendous treat.

Q: Were you involved in other aspects of the president's visit?

HUGHES: I had Strobe who was very easy because all he wanted to do was rest. It was the last stop on a very grueling NATO connected schedule.

Q: Strobe Talbott? Had they been to Moscow, too?

HUGHES: Yes and as I say, it was the very last stop. I went with him everywhere. As a matter of fact he was the one who gave out the retirement awards the year that I retired which was lovely because I've always liked him very much, but he said something about, "Well, you survived" and I said, "Yes, I did." So, they all knew about our ambassador.

Q: So, in survival terms he was talking about that experience as opposed to the president's visit?

HUGHES: Oh, no, he knew the president's visit was going to be just fine and it was.

Q: Let's see, what else about Copenhagen? You mentioned the peacekeeping, the president's visit, anything else?

HUGHES: I don't think so. There was the usual and I wasn't involved because of the age of my children, but there were the usual school issues.

Q: You were not on the school board?

HUGHES: No.

Q: Did you have an inspection?

HUGHES: No, we didn't.

Q: The reason I ask that is the only time I've ever been to Copenhagen or to Denmark, I actually went as an inspector. The only time I ever was an inspector, it was only three weeks I was actually in Rome at the time, but it was a good experience.

HUGHES: I would have liked that.

End of Reader